



US011676187B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Mozzami et al.

(10) **Patent No.: US 11,676,187 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent: Jun. 13, 2023**

(54) **METHOD, SYSTEM, AND DEVICE TO INTELLIGENTLY CREATE EFFECTIVE LISTINGS**

USPC 705/26.8, 26.1–27.2
See application file for complete search history.

(71) Applicant: **Mercari, Inc.**, Palo Alto, CA (US)

(72) Inventors: **Mohammad-Mahdi Mozzami**, San Jose, CA (US); **Manikandan Sankar**, Hayward, CA (US); **Laura Furman**, San Francisco, CA (US); **Dhruv Mehrotra**, Mountain View, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **MERCARI, INC.**, Palo Alto, CA (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 334 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **16/875,051**

(22) Filed: **May 15, 2020**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2020/0380584 A1 Dec. 3, 2020

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 62/854,420, filed on May 30, 2019.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06Q 30/0601 (2023.01)
G06F 18/22 (2023.01)
G06V 10/764 (2022.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G06Q 30/0605** (2013.01); **G06F 18/22** (2023.01); **G06Q 30/0633** (2013.01); **G06V 10/764** (2022.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC G06Q 30/0633; G06Q 30/0605; G06Q 30/0601–0645

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2004/0064201 A1* 4/2004 Aragones G05B 13/024
700/36
2007/0239999 A1* 10/2007 Honig G06N 7/005
713/194
2012/0054113 A1* 3/2012 Jayaraman G06Q 99/00
705/306
2019/0149725 A1* 5/2019 Adato G06V 20/17
348/158

(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Nabeel Abdul Latheef, Shaping up E-Commerce with Machine Learning, Towards Data Science, Nov. 18, 2017 (Year: 2017).*

Primary Examiner — Allison G Wood

Assistant Examiner — Anna Mae Mitros

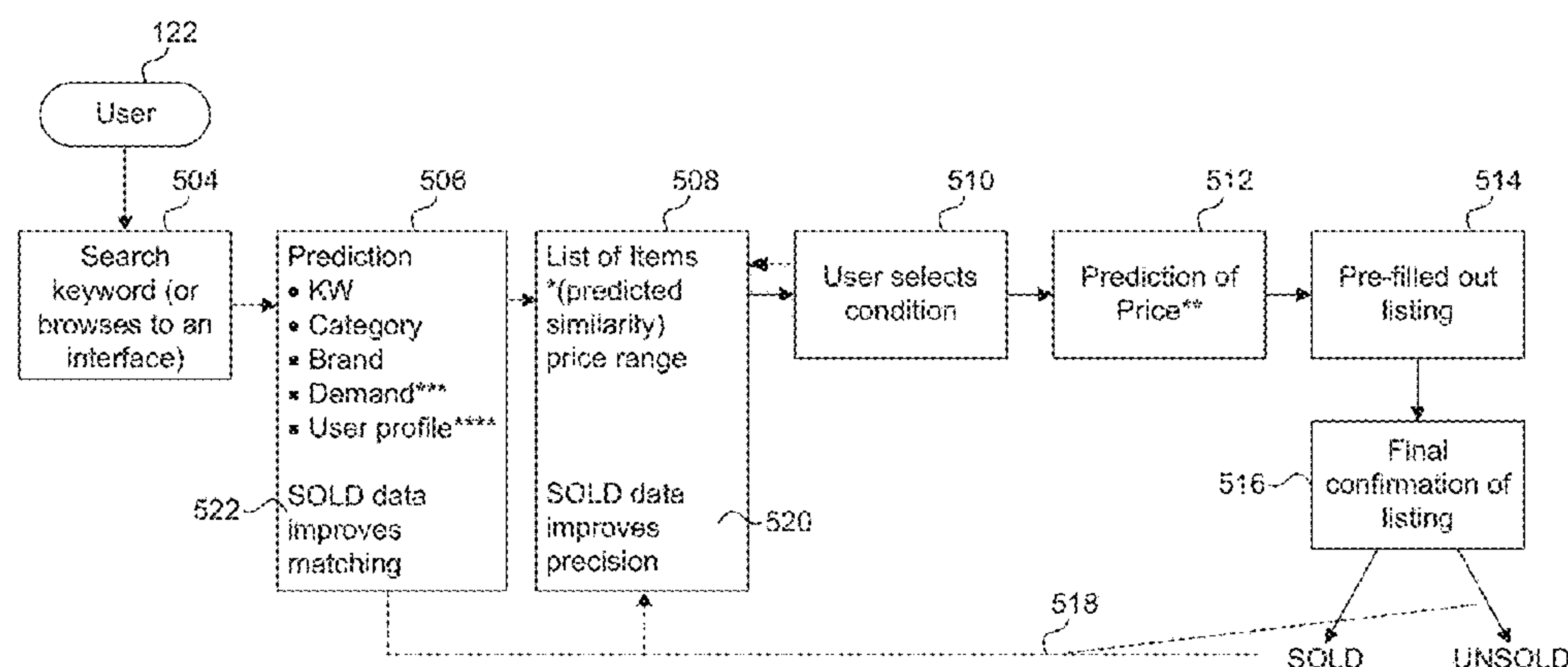
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox, P.L.L.C.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed herein are system, method, and computer program product embodiments for the prediction of listing attributes for a for sale object (FSO). Data analyzed with respect to historical listings in a database is compared to attributes of the FSO using machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI), in order for the user to select a category related to the FSO, and for a listing generation module to generate a ultimately reduced set of listings related to the FSO, where the ultimately reduced set is used to predict a price for the FSO based on the selected category, and generate a listing for the FSO, wherein a listing for the FSO is monitored, and information from the monitoring is used as machine learning feedback to train and enhance predictions.

19 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets

502



* Step not present in some embodiments
** List of items and price prediction is same step
*** Demand prediction for some embodiments
**** User profile similarity only in some embodiments

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2019/0294879 A1* 9/2019 Tibau-Puig G06V 20/20
2019/0311301 A1* 10/2019 Pyati G06F 16/901

* cited by examiner

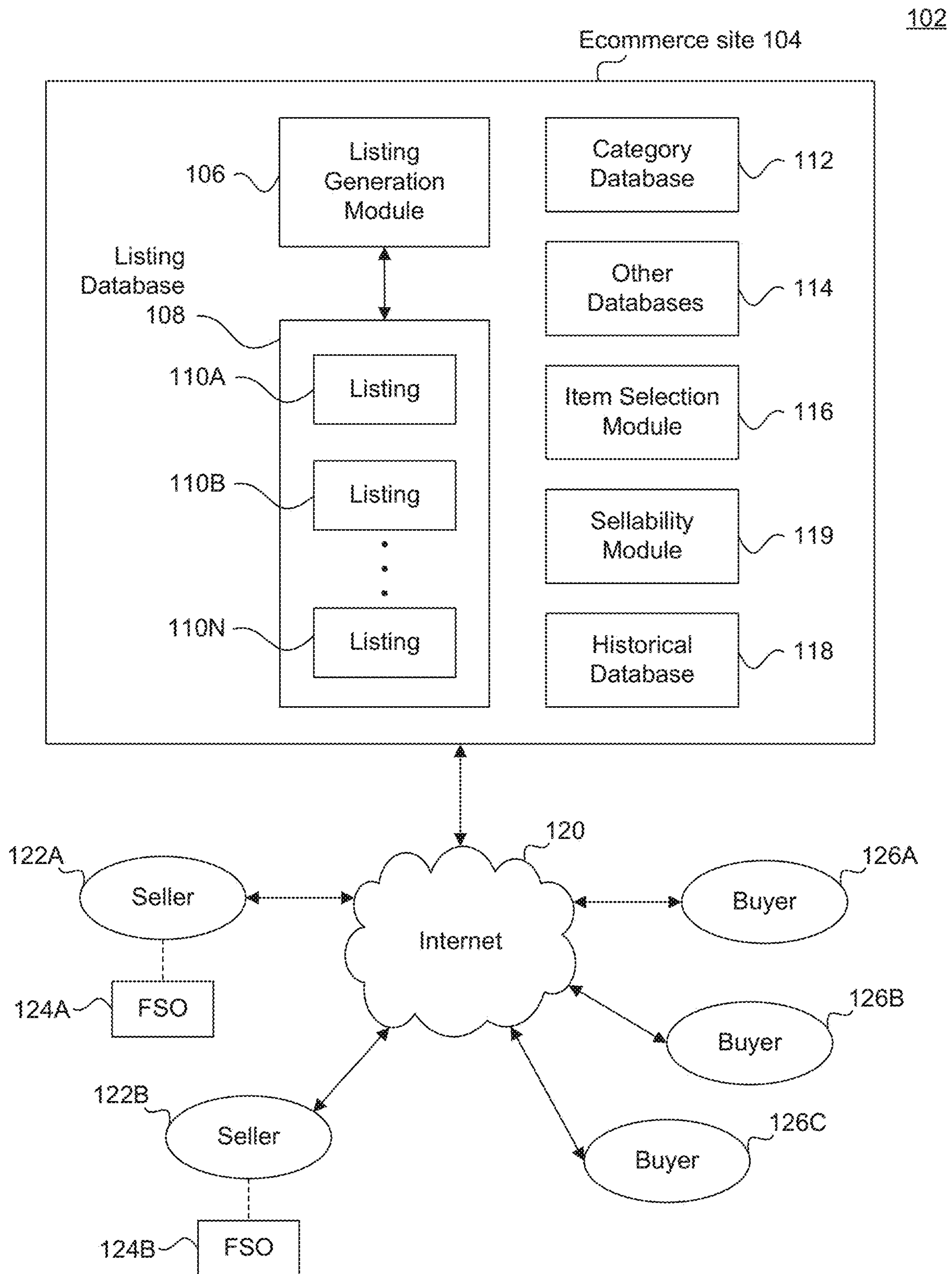


FIG. 1

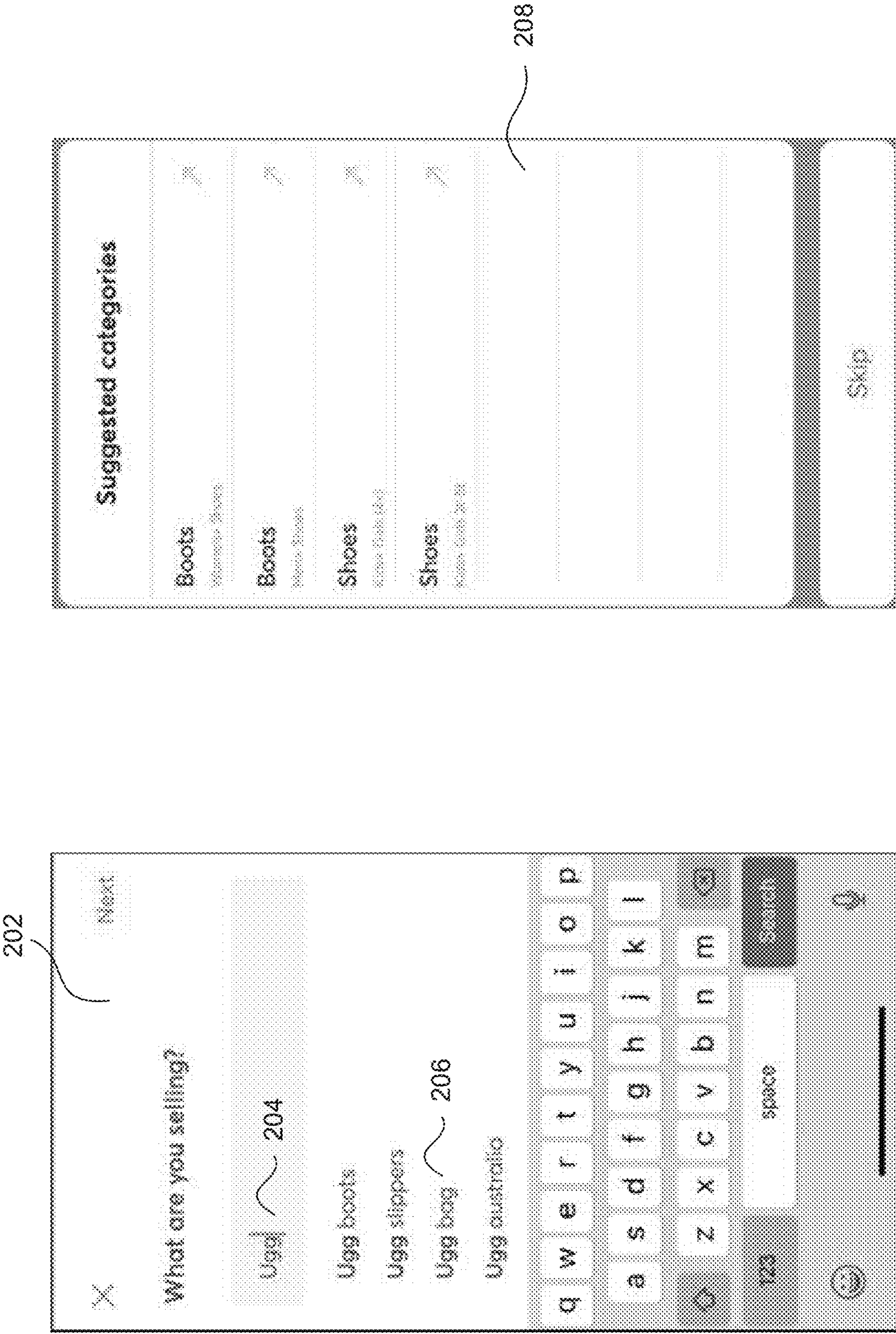


FIG. 2A

FIG. 2B

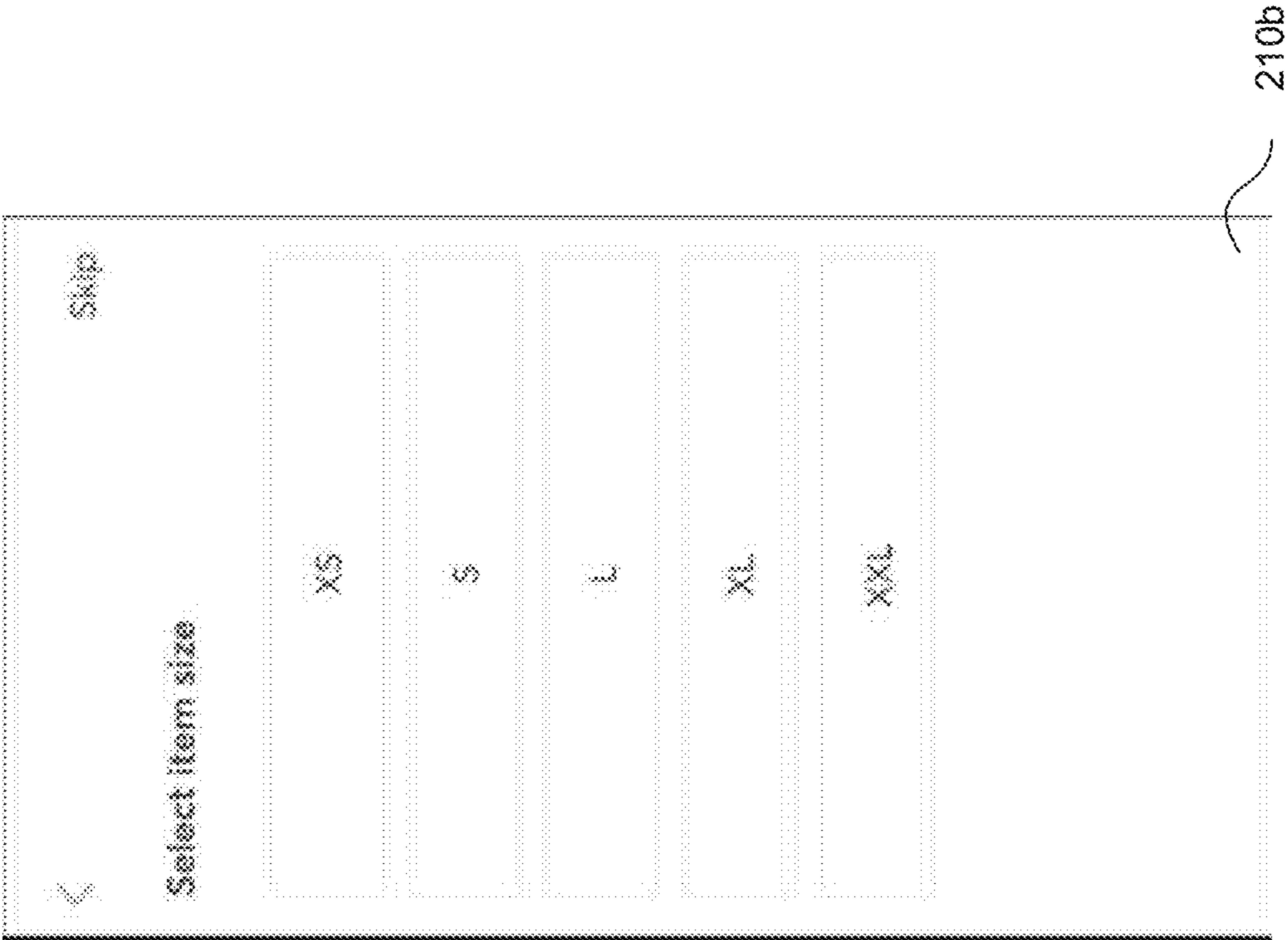


FIG. 2D



FIG. 2C

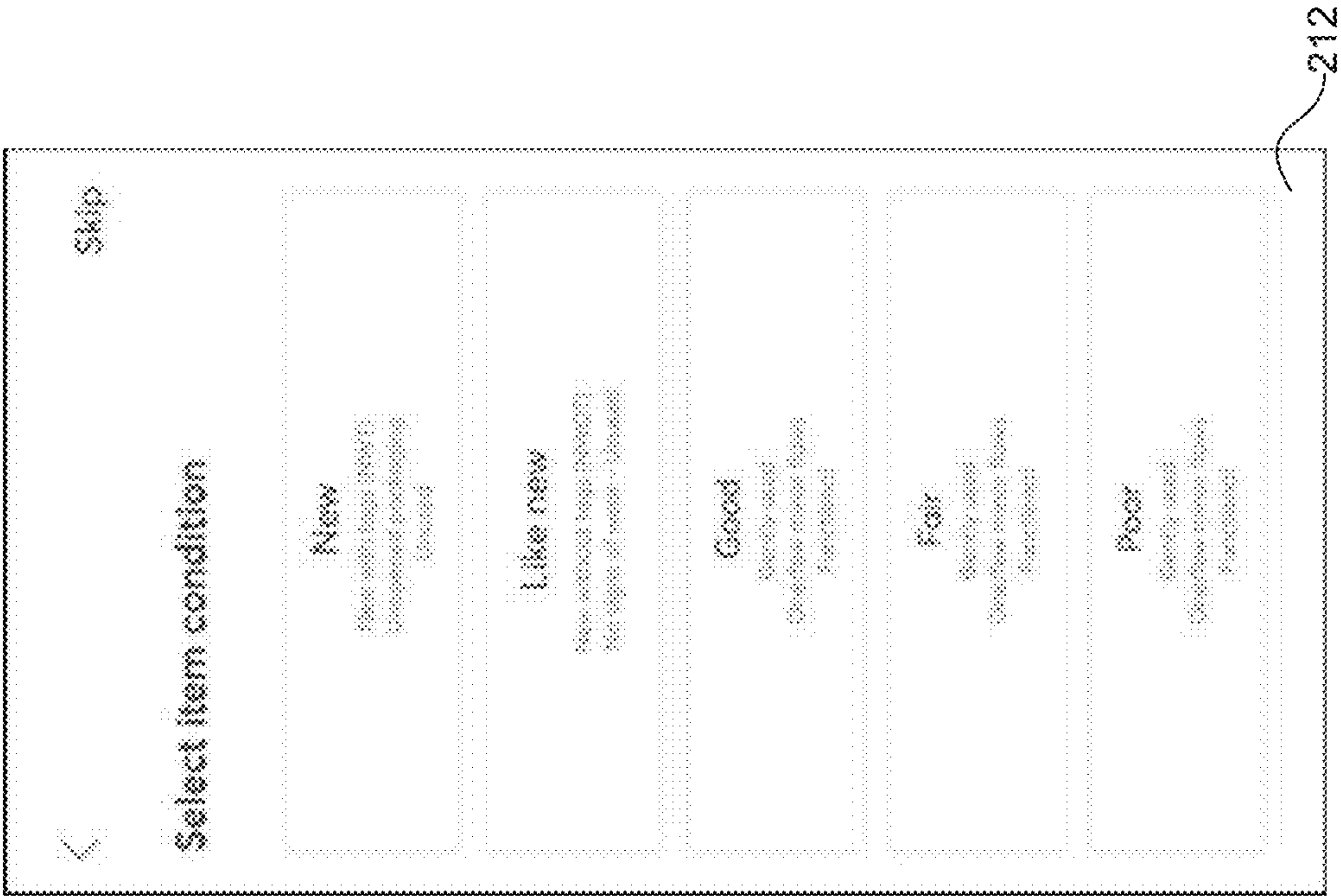


FIG. 2E

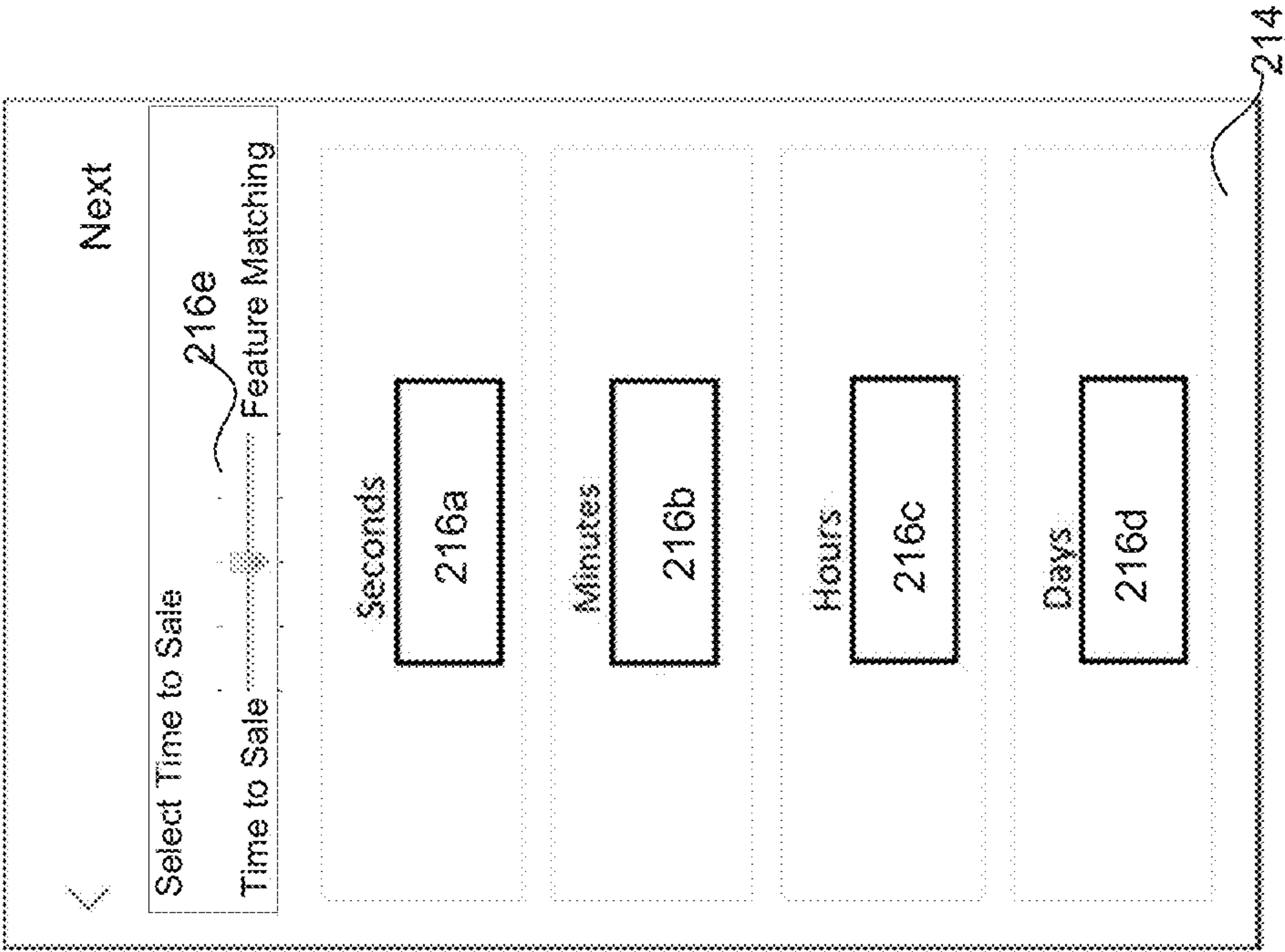


FIG. 2F

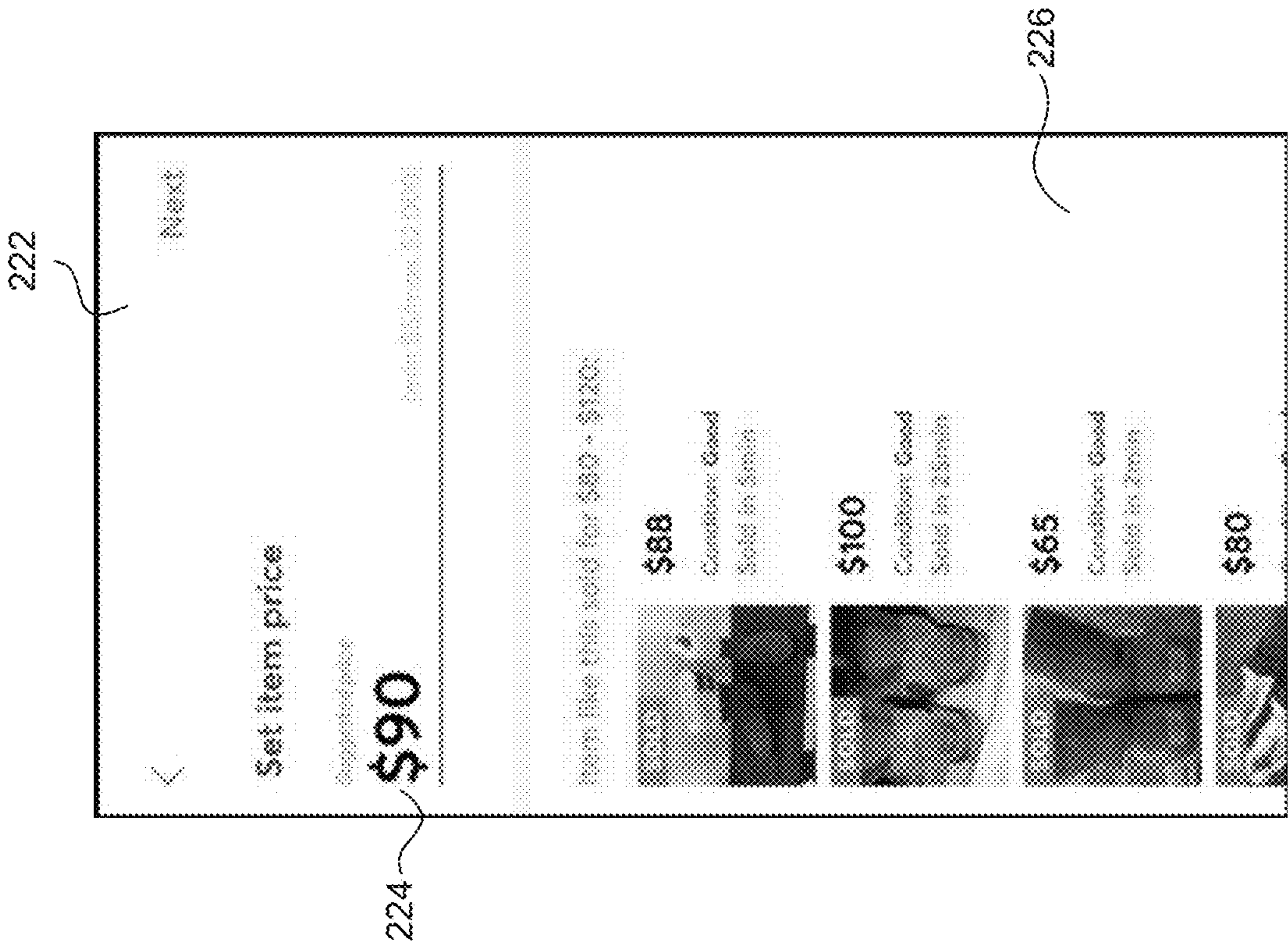


FIG. 2G

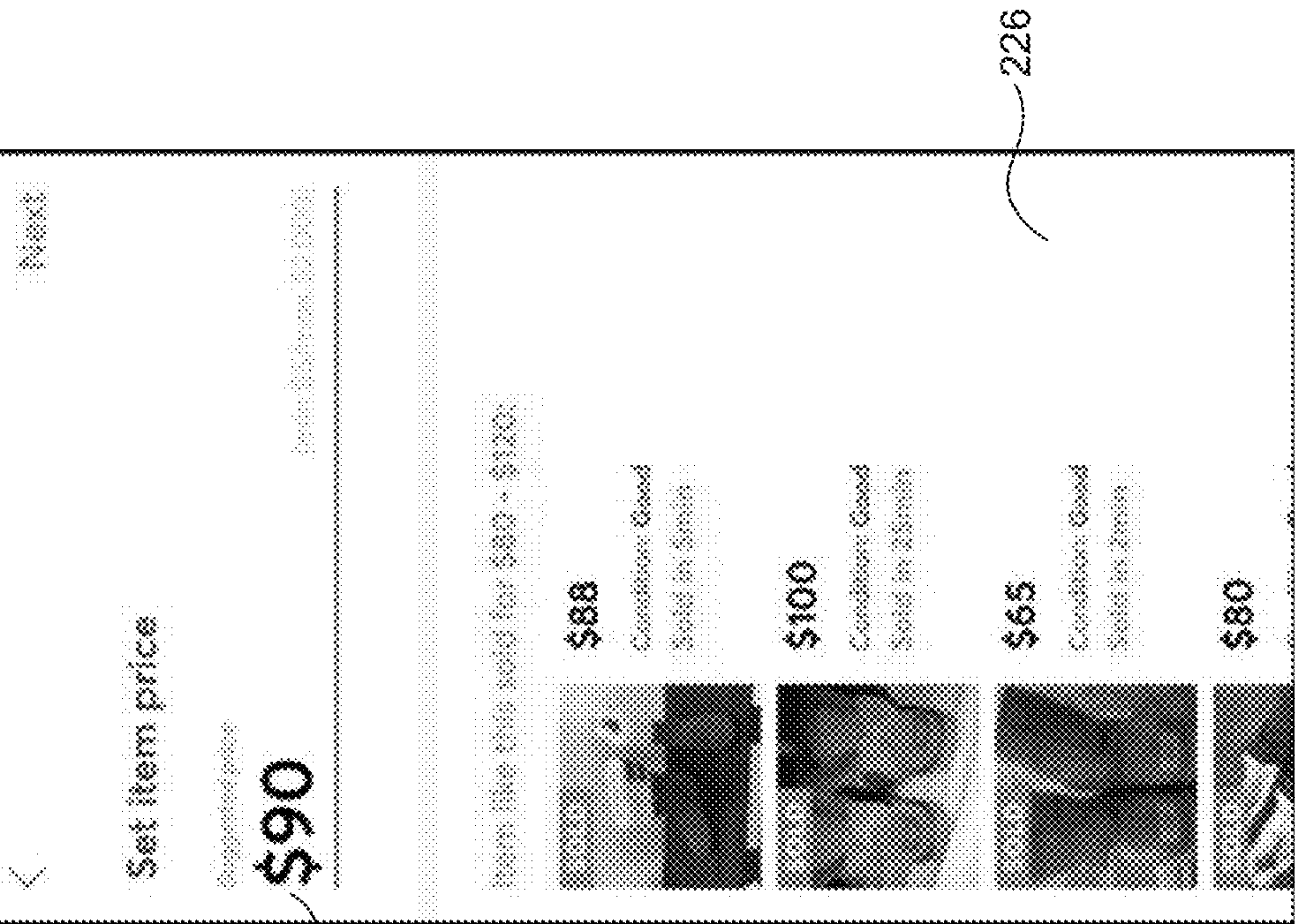


FIG. 2H

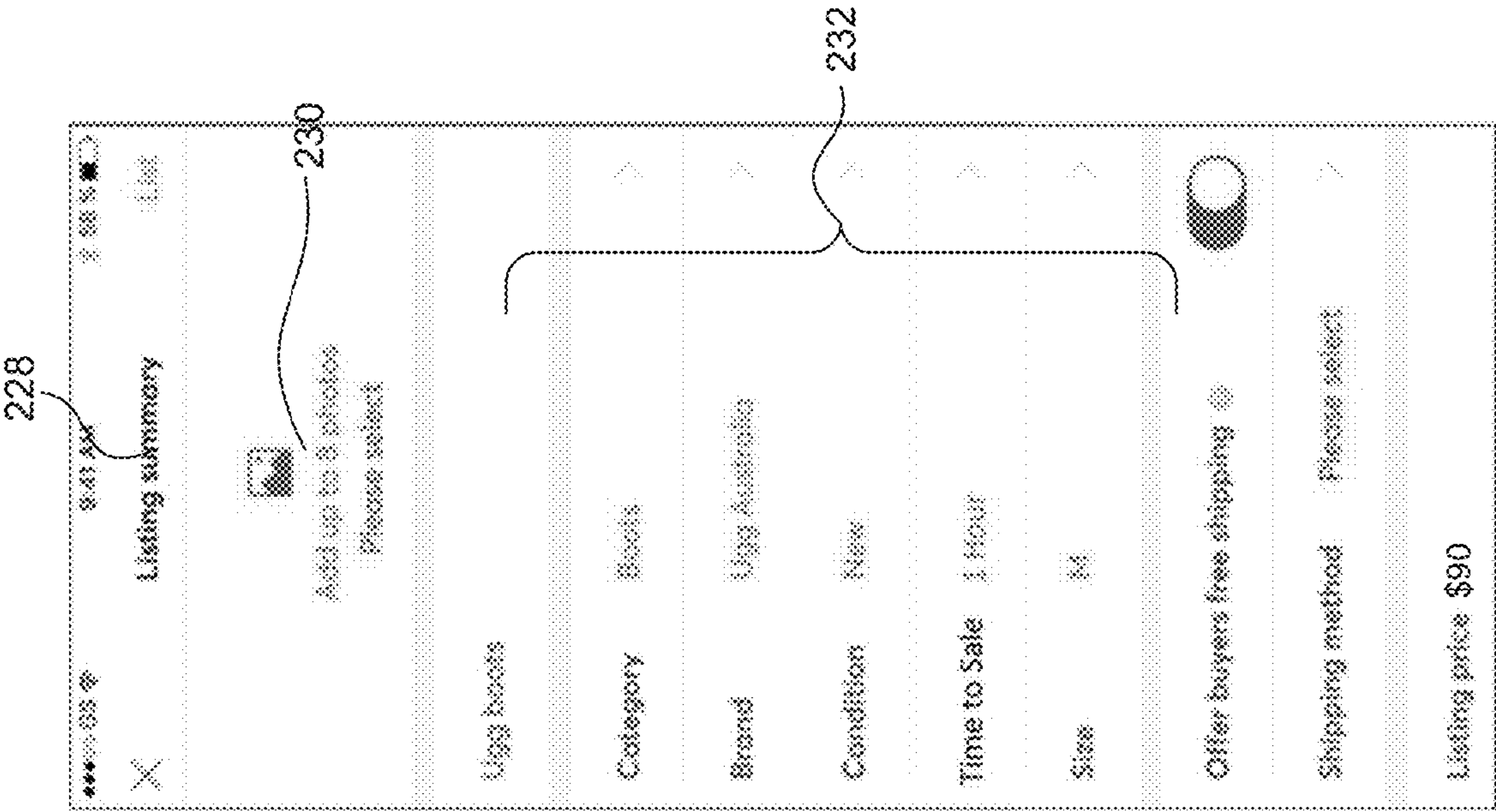


FIG. 21

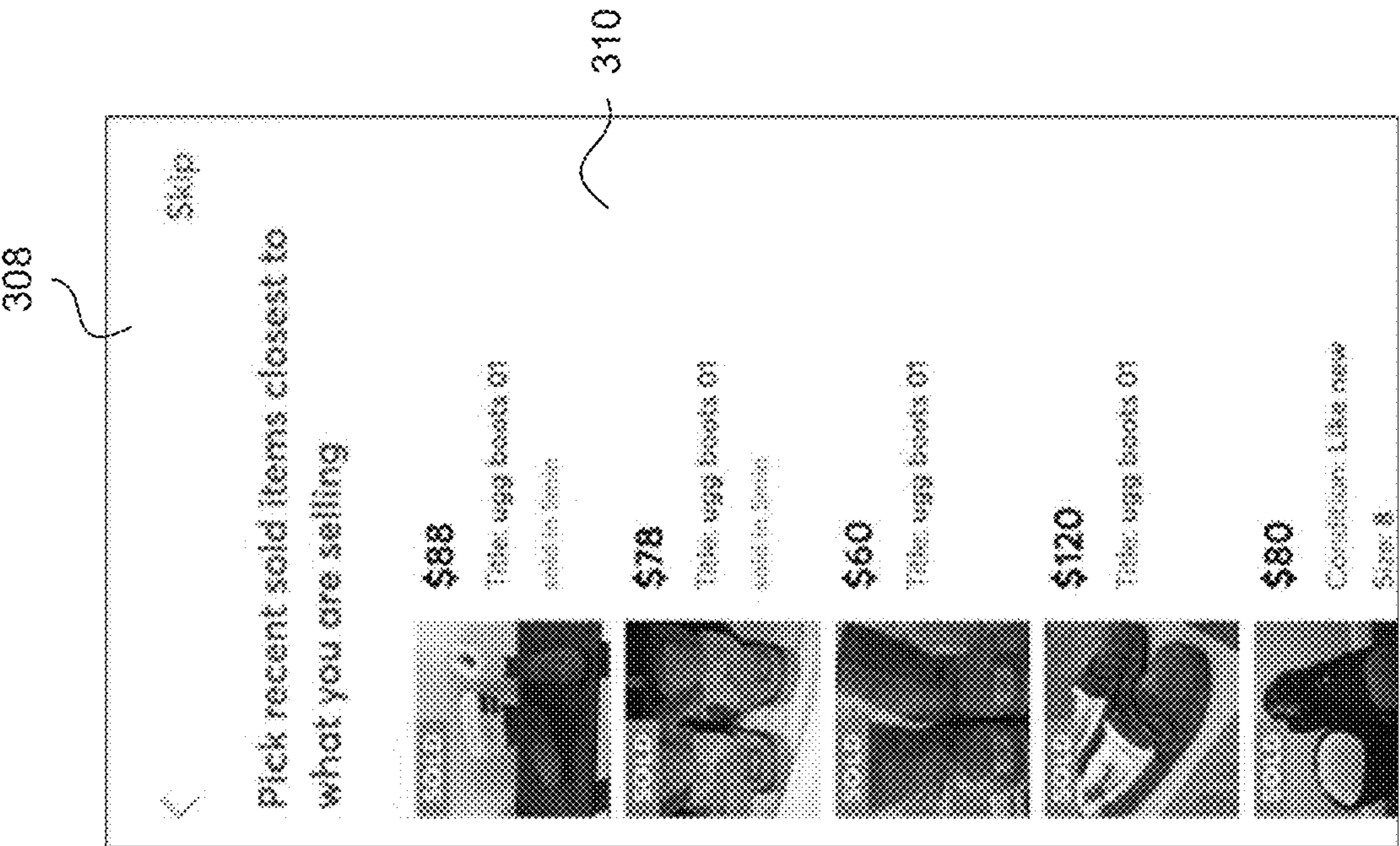


FIG. 3A

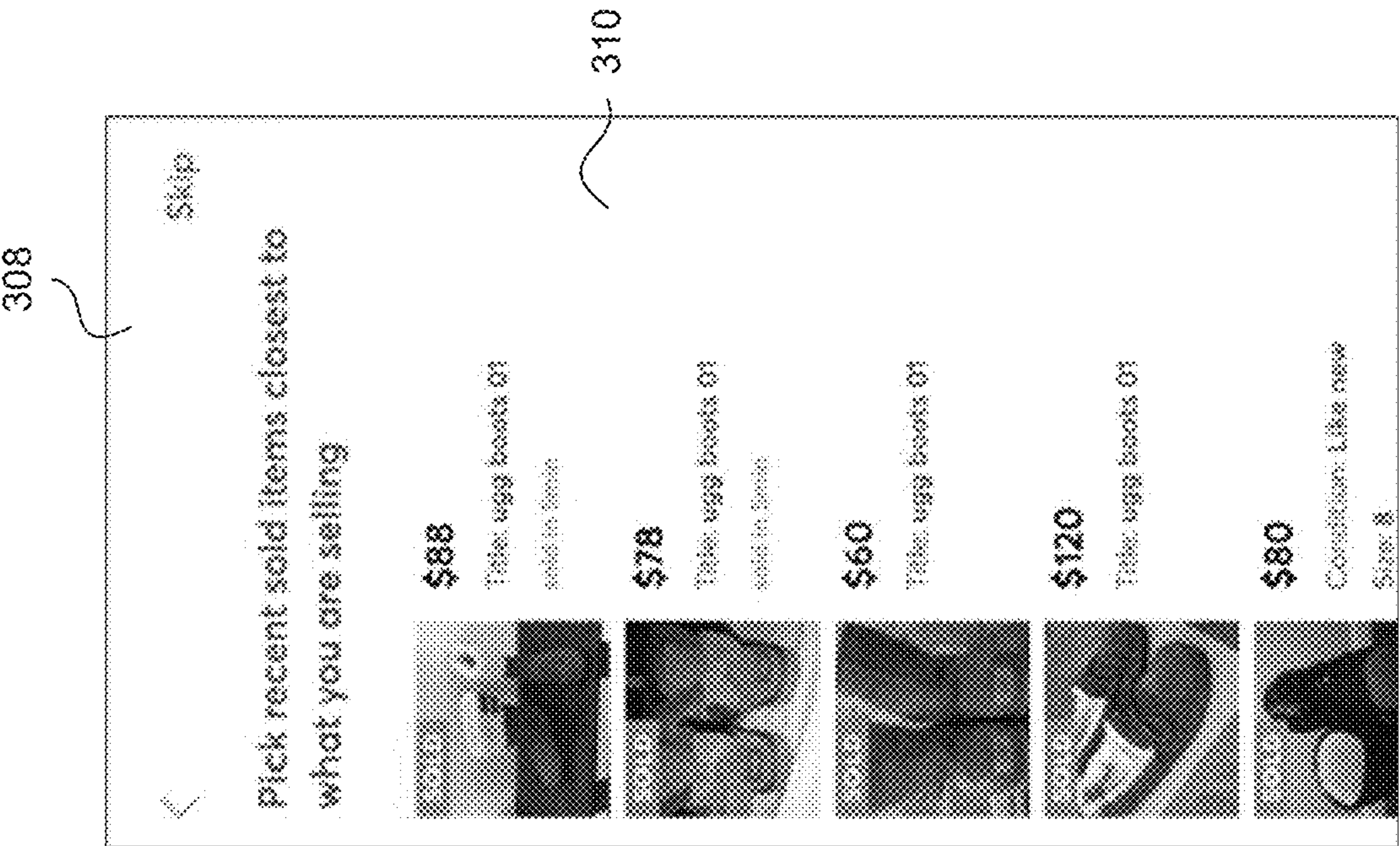


FIG. 3B

312

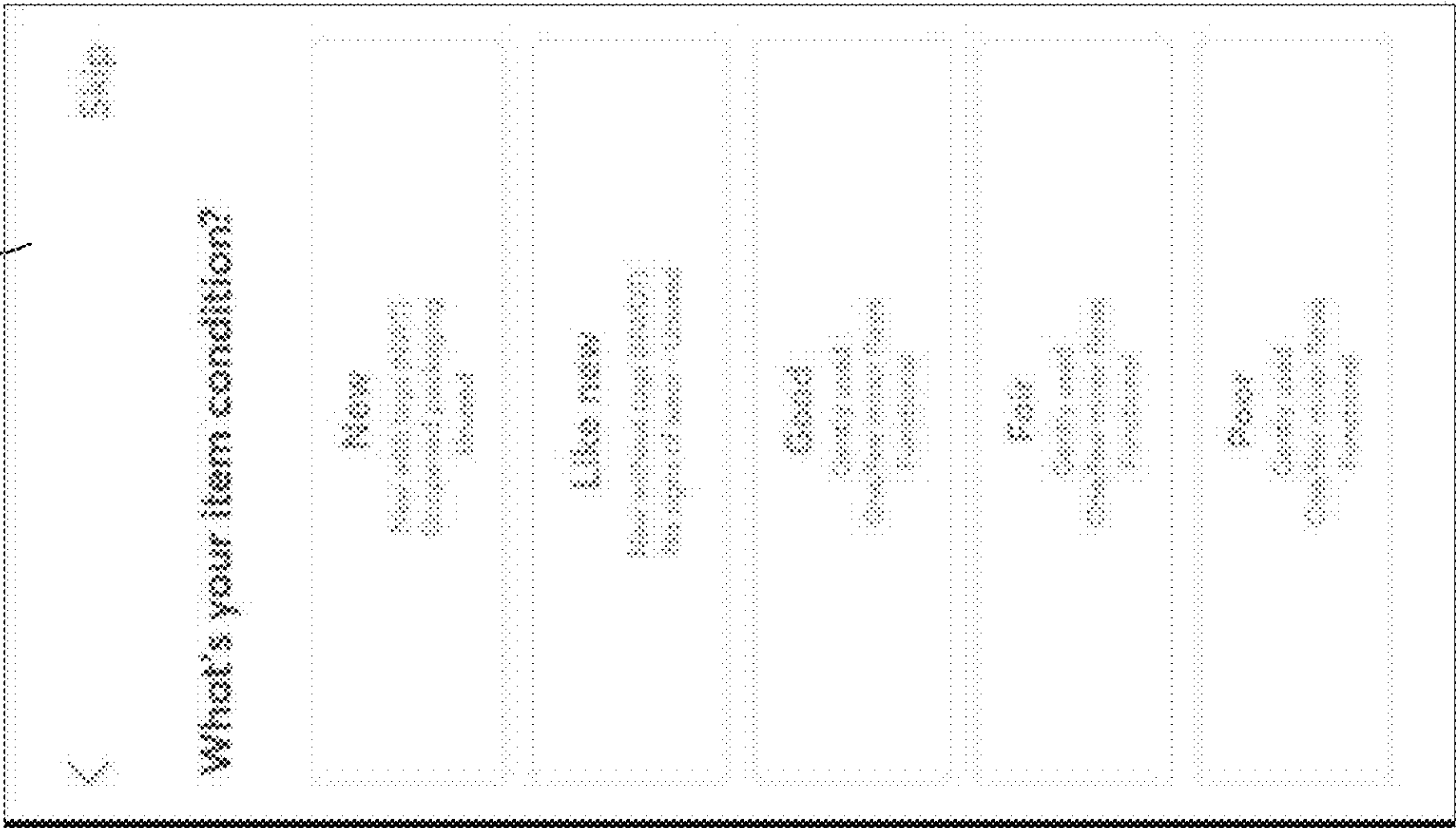


FIG. 3C

314

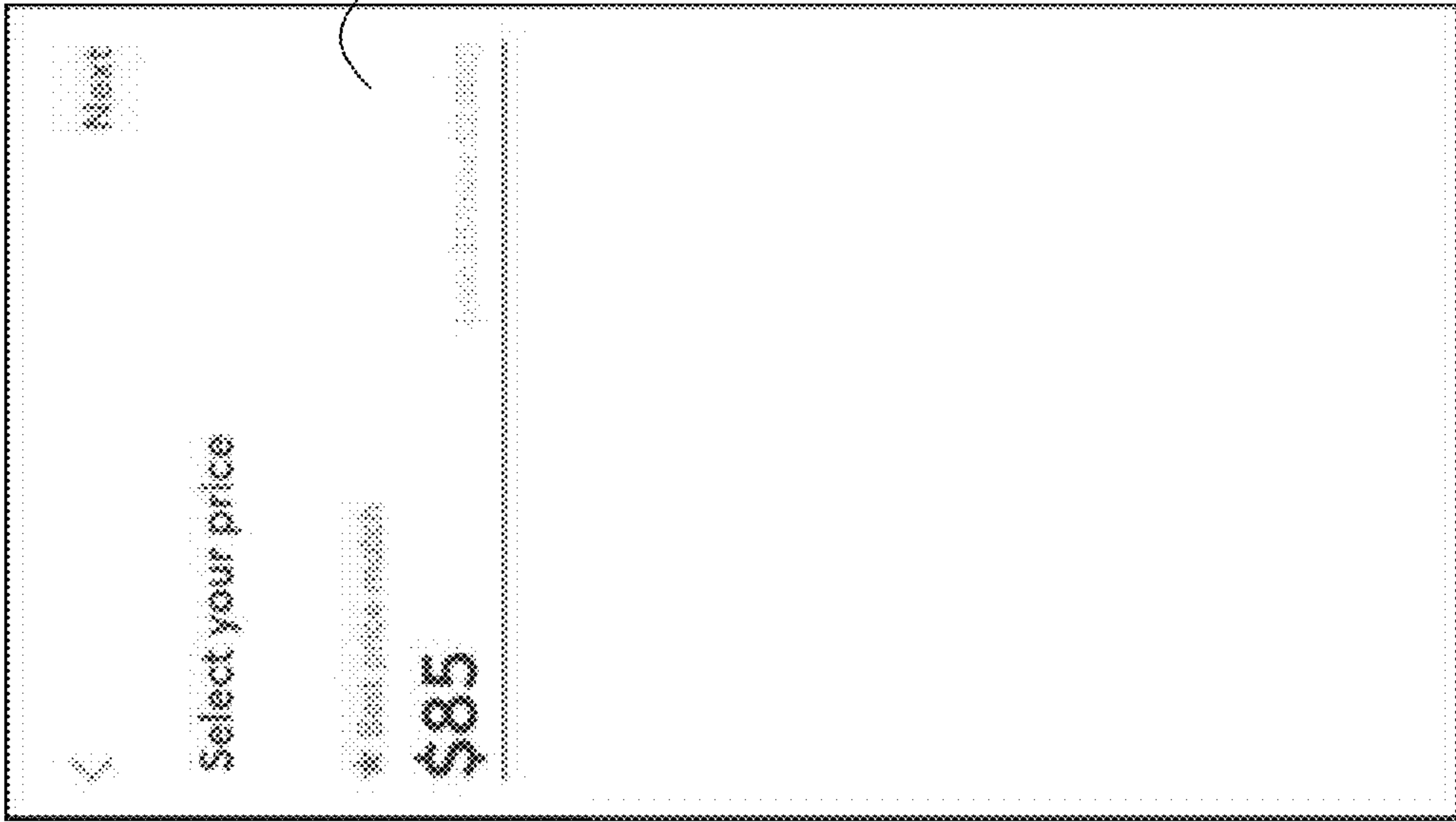


FIG. 3D

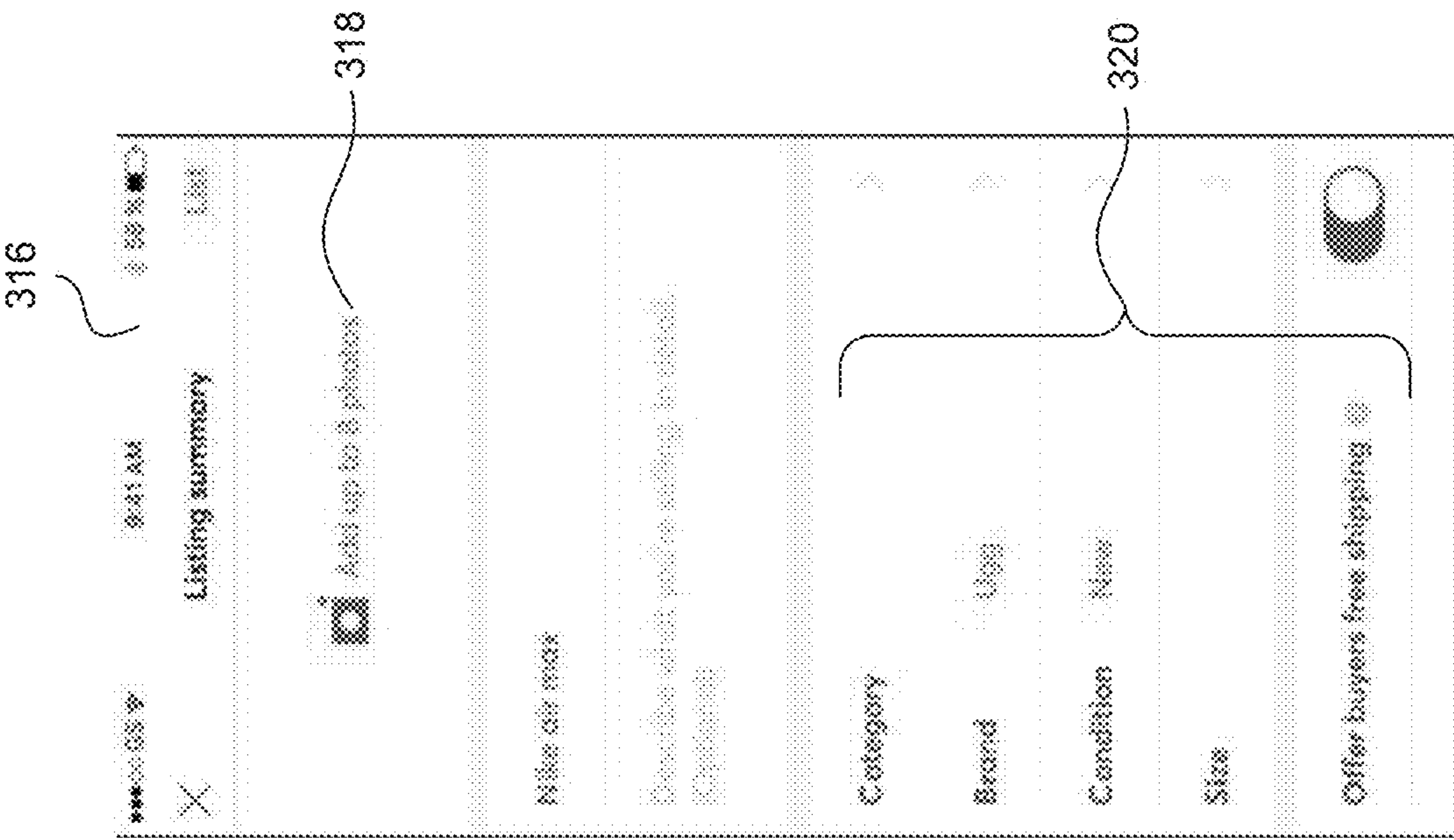


FIG. 3E

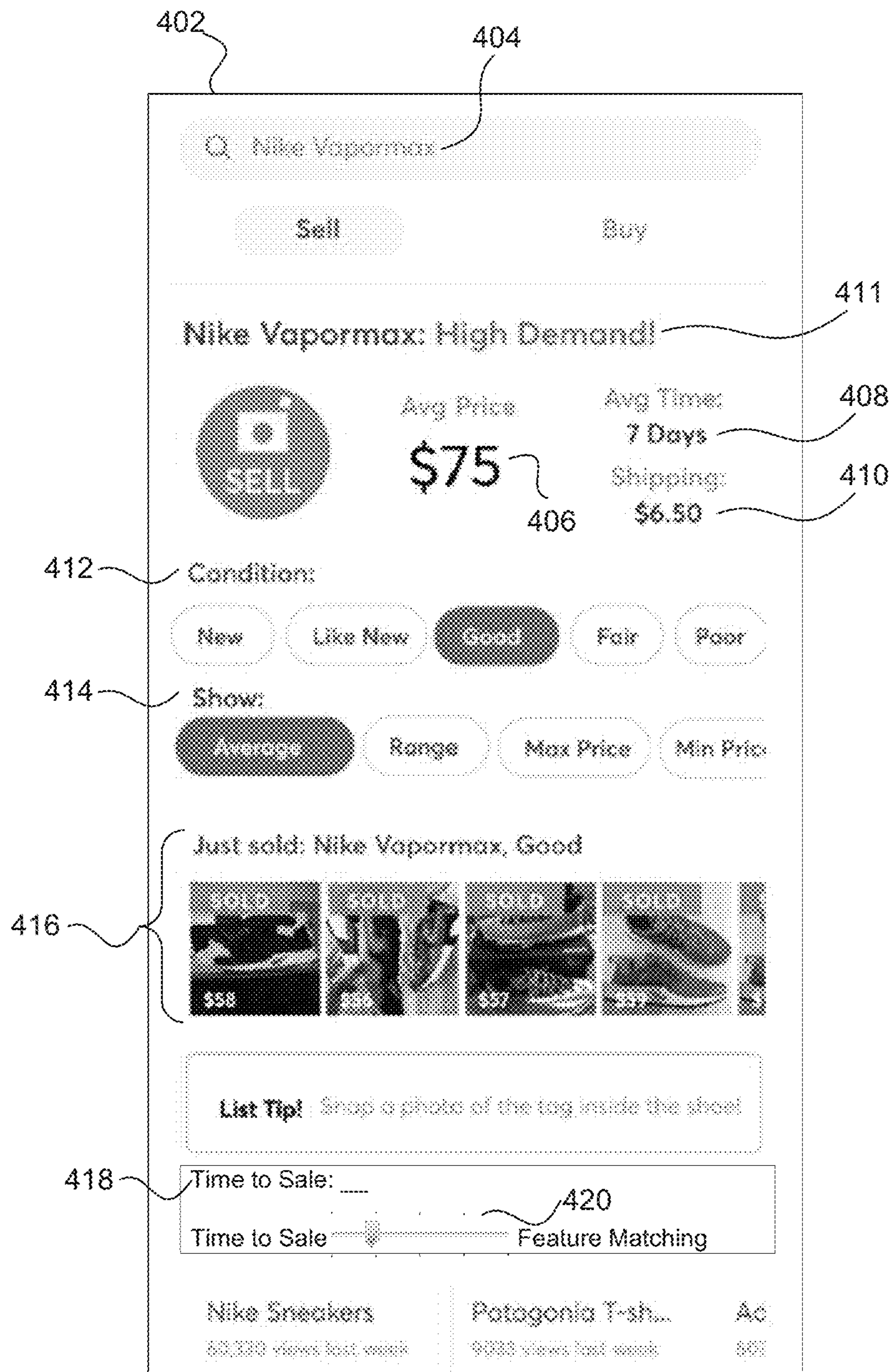


FIG. 4A

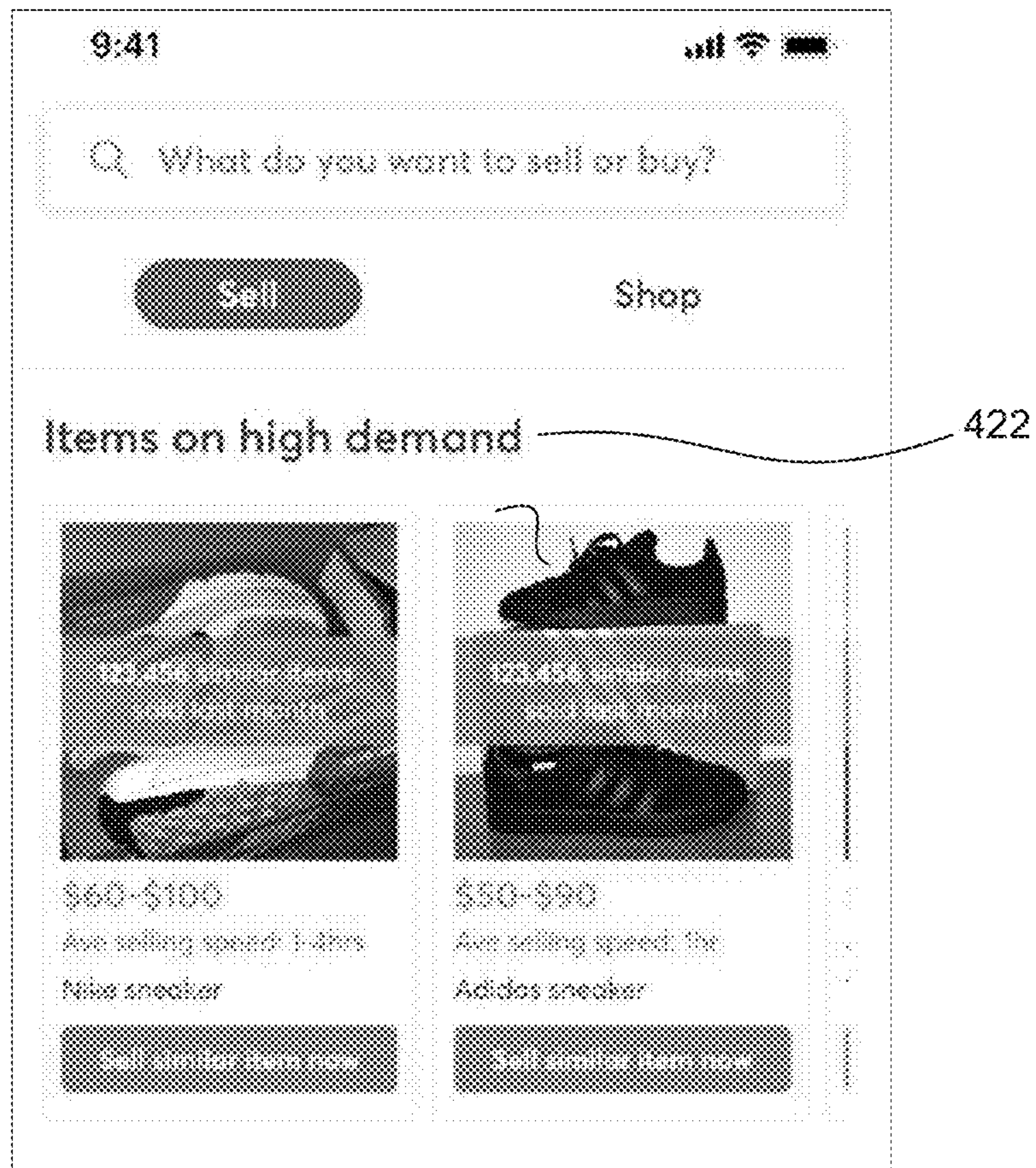
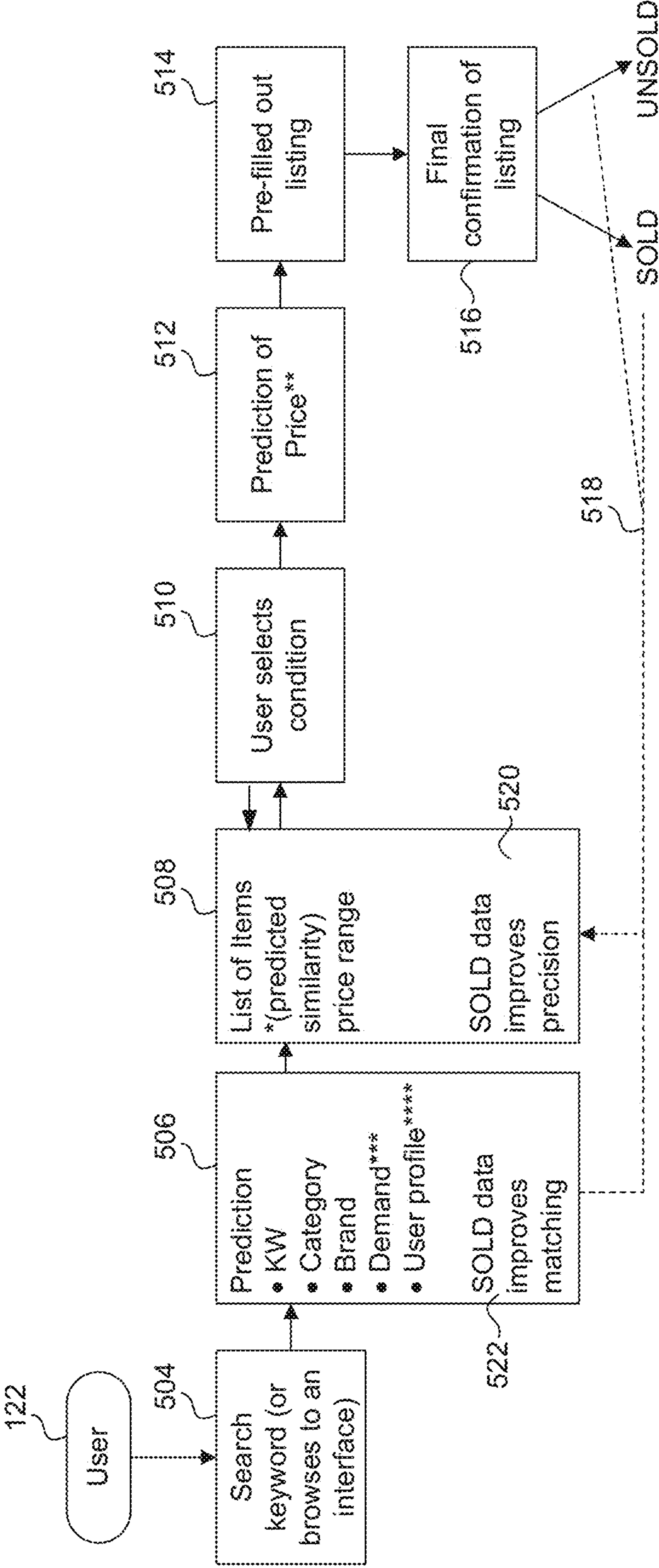


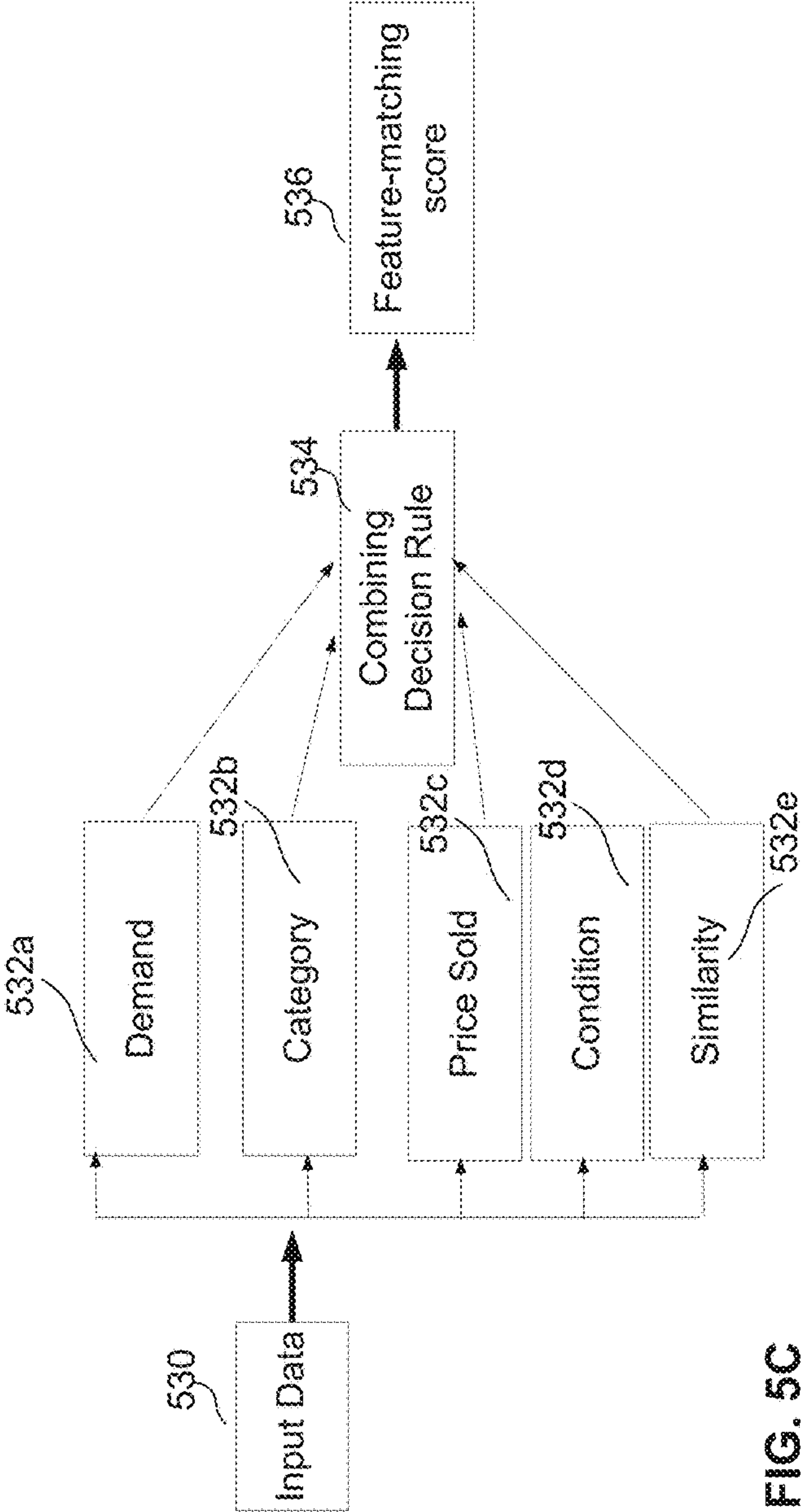
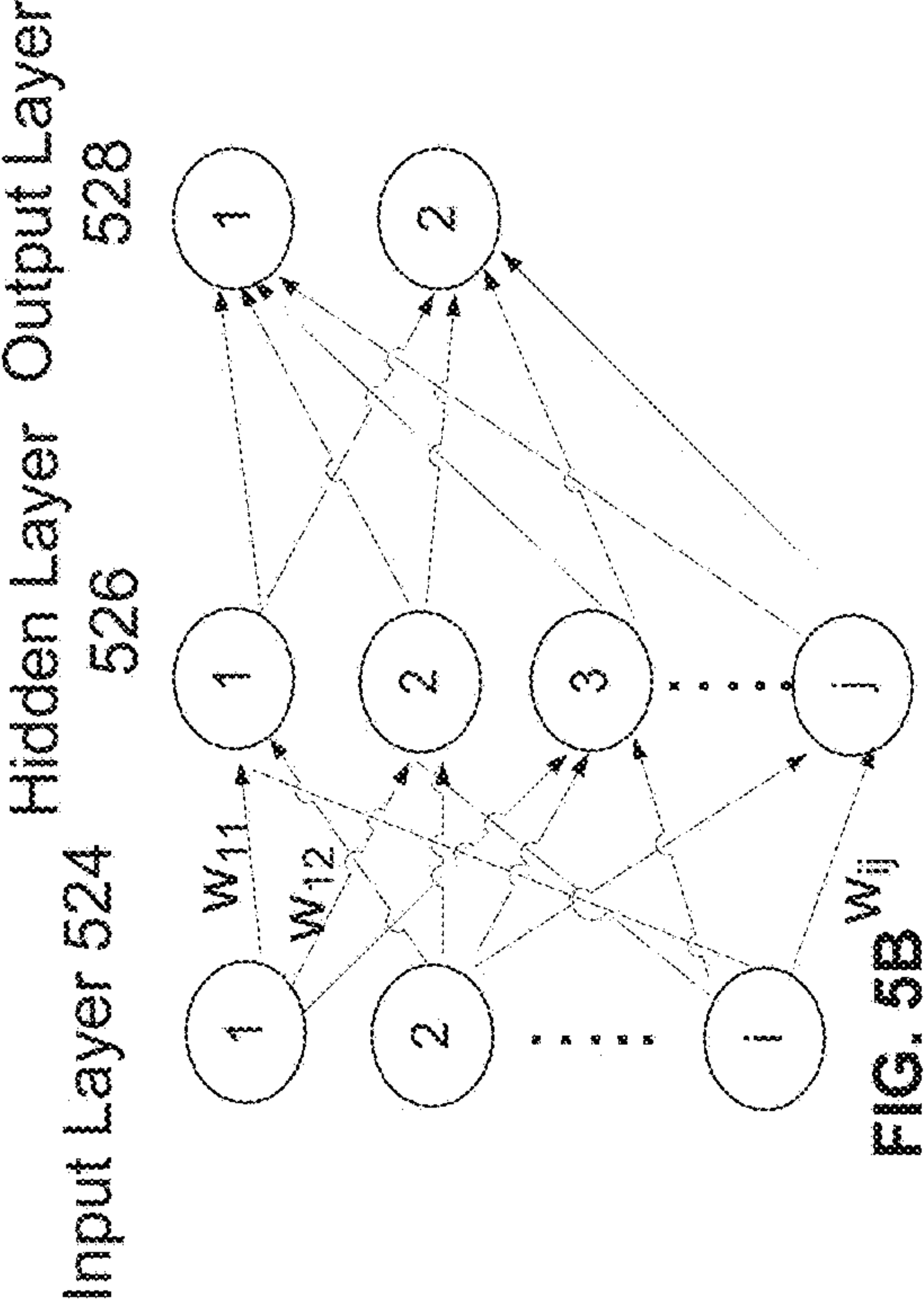
FIG. 4B

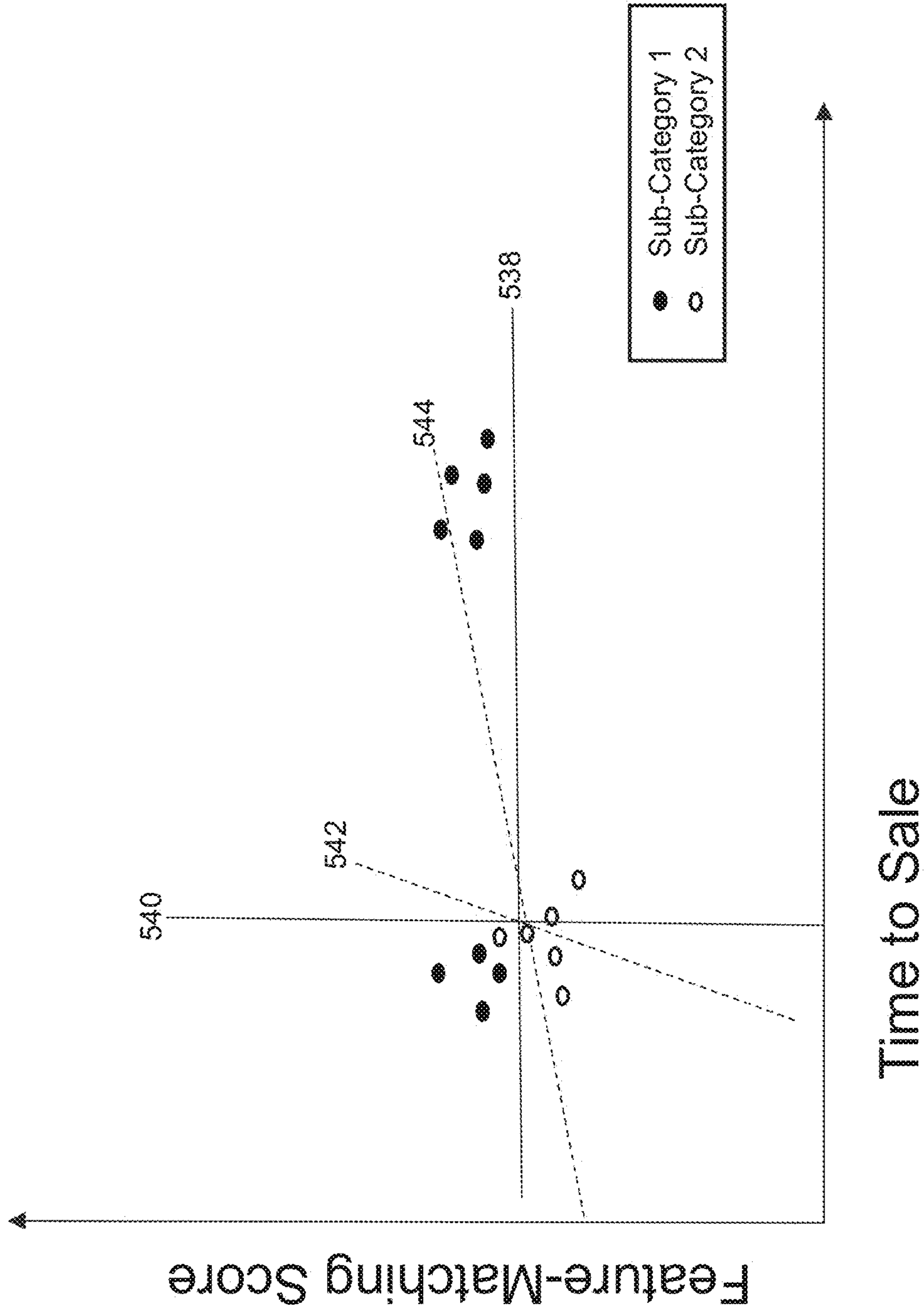
502



* Step not present in some embodiments
** List of items and price prediction is same step
*** Demand prediction for some embodiments
**** User profile similarity only in some embodiments

FIG. 5A





SOLO

Computer System 600

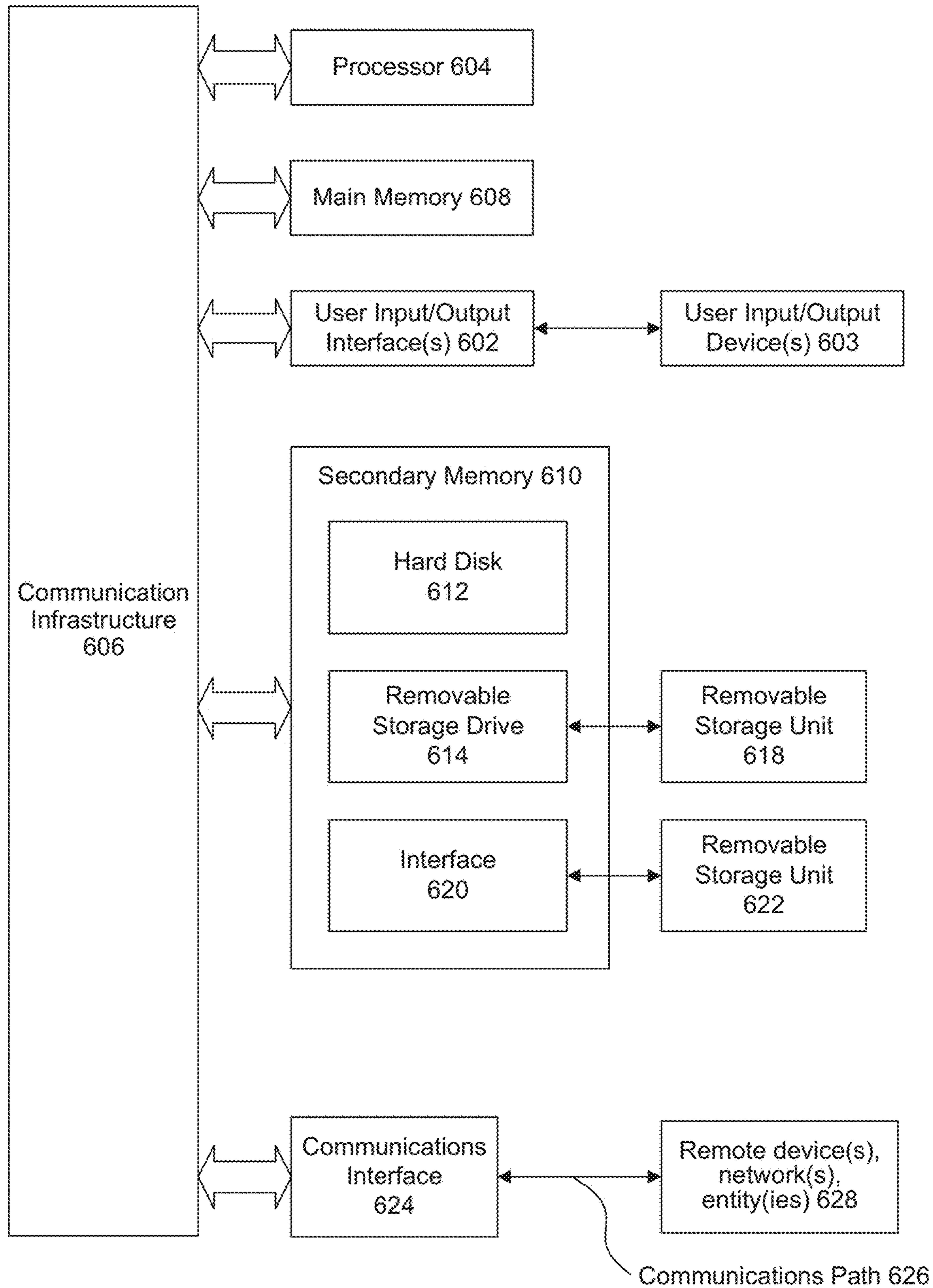


FIG. 6

METHOD, SYSTEM, AND DEVICE TO INTELLIGENTLY CREATE EFFECTIVE LISTINGS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a non-provisional of and claims the benefit of U.S. provisional Application 62/854,420, filed May 30, 2019, which is incorporated by reference herein.

BACKGROUND

A number of ecommerce sites exist where users can sell their unwanted items, such as MERCARI, EBAY, AMAZON, YAHOO, POSHMARK, LETGO, CRAIGSLIST, etc. In order to sell on these sites, users must manually create listings for offering their items for sale. The quality of such listings can vary greatly, and may depend on a number of factors, such as the user's experience creating listings, the information the user has on the item (such as make, model, brand, size, color, features, condition, age, etc.), the user's photo taking skills, whether the user is rushed when creating the listing, whether this is the first time the user has ever tried to sell an item of this type, whether the item is the user's or is being sold for a friend or family member, etc. Since a well-constructed listing (having accurate, complete information) will increase the chances that the associated item will sell, it would be advantageous if innovative computer technology could be employed to enhance and standardize the quality of listings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

The accompanying drawings are incorporated herein and form a part of the specification.

FIG. 1 illustrates a block diagram of a computing environment that includes an ecommerce site where users can buy and sell items and services, where such items/services are sometimes called herein "for sale objects" (FSO), according to some embodiments.

FIGS. 2A-2I collectively illustrate example screenshots generated by a computer system using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) technologies for the intelligent creation of consistently high quality listings for selling FSOs on an ecommerce site, according to a first embodiment.

FIGS. 3A-3E collectively illustrate example screenshots generated by a computer system using AI and ML technologies for the intelligent creation of consistently high quality listings for selling FSOs on an ecommerce site, according to a second embodiment.

FIGS. 4A and 4B represent an alternative use case for the technologies illustrated in FIGS. 1, 2A-2I and/or 3A-3E, according to some embodiments.

FIGS. 5A-5D illustrate an example operational flow diagram of a computer system that uses AI and ML technologies for the intelligent creation of consistently high quality listings for selling FSOs on an ecommerce site, as well as sample embodiments of the AI and ML technologies, according to some embodiments.

FIG. 6 illustrates an example computer system useful for implementing various embodiments.

In the drawings, like reference numbers generally indicate identical or similar elements. Additionally, generally, the

left-most digit(s) of a reference number identifies the drawing in which the reference number first appears.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Provided herein are system, apparatus, article of manufacture, method and/or computer program product embodiments, and/or combinations and sub-combinations thereof, for using computer technology to automate the creation of consistently high quality listings for selling "for sale objects" (FSO) on an ecommerce site. In some embodiments, the computer technology employs artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) computing techniques, algorithms, methods, modules, components, software and/or other technology, as described herein.

FSOs may be any item, product, object, article, thing, piece, component, sub-component, combination, merchandise, inventory, and/or service that a user wishes to sell via an ecommerce site. When selling items on the ecommerce site, the user is sometimes called a "seller." When buying items on the ecommerce site, the user is sometimes called a "buyer." It is noted that a given user can be, at different times, a buyer, a seller, or a buyer and a seller.

FIG. 1 illustrates a block diagram of a computing environment 102 that includes an ecommerce site 104 where sellers 122 can sell their FSOs 124, and buyers 126 can browse, search and buy the FSOs 124, according to some embodiments. The sellers 122 and buyers 126 can access the ecommerce site 104 via the Internet 120 or any other network or communication medium, standard, protocol or technology.

The ecommerce site 104 may include a listing database 108 that stores a plurality of listings 110. The listings 110 may be created by sellers 122 to sell their respective FSOs 124 on the ecommerce site 104. Traditionally, sellers 122 were required to create their listings 110 manually, and listings 110 varied widely in quality.

But according to this disclosure, sellers 122 may interact with a listing generation module 106 and item selection module 116 to automatically create listings 110 that are accurate, complete and of consistently high quality.

The FSOs 124 may each be associated with a category, such as smartphone, APPLE MACBOOK, garden tool, men's belt, motorcycle, office desk, woman's purse, and comic books, to name just some examples. These categories are stored in a category database 112. Other information regarding FSOs 124 (such as make, model, brand, size, color, features, condition, age, etc.) that may be used to create listings 110 may be stored in other databases 114.

Each of the listings 110 may have a sellability score that was generated by a sellability module 119. Sellability score is a measure of how likely a given FSO 124 will sell on the ecommerce site 104. For example, the sellability score for a given FSO 124 may be a number between 0 and 1, with the number indicating how likely the FSO 124 will sell on the ecommerce site 104 within a given period of time.

Information that the sellability module 119 may use in generating the sellability score for a given FSO 124 can include information associated with the images in the associated listing 110, such as but not limited to the number of image(s), the quality of the image(s), etc.

Other information that the sellability module 119 may use in generating the sellability score can include a price associated with the FSO 124 (that is, the price that the FSO 124 is being offered for sale). For example, the sellability module

119 may compare the price to the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) of items similar to the FSO 124 in determining sellability score.

Additional information that the sellability module 119 may use in generating the sellability score can include description information in the listing 110 associated with the FSO 124.

Other information that the sellability module 119 may use in generating the sellability score can include the features associated with the FSO 124. Example features may include, but are not limited to, category, brand, make, model, manufacturer, configuration, customization, color, serial number, condition indicators (e.g., poor, used, like new, new), time to sale, geographic location, etc.

The sellability module 119 may also consider other information when generating the sellability score for a FSO 124, such as (but not limited to) information associated with the seller 122 of the FSO 124.

For a given listing 110, the sellability module 119 may generate a first sellability score when the listing 110 is created, and a second sellability score when the listing 110 sells. The first sellability score may be based on the offer price, for example, and the second sellability score may be based on the final purchase price, as well as other information that was obtained by monitoring the listing 110 while active (that is, prior to selling) on the ecommerce site 104. Such other information may include how long the listing 110 took to sell, the number of views of the listing 110, the number of offers, the number of different buyers 126 who viewed the listing 110 and/or made offers, how often the seller 122 modified the listing 110, etc.

Sellability scores are further described in U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/288,158 titled "Determining Sellability Score And Cancellability Score," filed Feb. 28, 2019, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

The ecommerce site 104 may include a database of historical information 118. The historical information 118 may store information pertaining to listings 110 that sold or did not sell, listings 110 that sold for the highest prices, listings 110 that sold in the shortest amounts of time, listings with the highest sellability scores (as determined by the sellability module 119), the original price and the sale price, description of the associated FSOs 124 (such as make, model, brand, size, color, manufacturer, damage, year, etc.), the number of views of each listing 110, the offers for each listing 110, as well as any other information included in the original listings 110 or collected by the ecommerce site 104 while the listings 110 were active and being monitored on the ecommerce site 104 (such as the second sellability scores described above).

FIGS. 2A-2I collectively illustrate example screenshots generated by a computer system using machine learning technology (such as the listing generation module 106 and the item selection module 116) for the intelligent creation of consistently high quality listings 110 for selling FSOs 124 on the ecommerce site 104, according to a first embodiment.

FIG. 2A illustrates screen shot 202, where a seller 122 may provide a short title 204 (that is, keywords) of the FSO 124 he wishes to sell. The listing generation module 106 may use the short title 204 to search the category database 112 and/or the other databases 114 to identify possible products and/or product categories that identify the FSO 124, which are displayed as 206. The seller 122 may select one of the items from this list 206. Assume, for purposes of example, that the seller 122 selected "Ugg boots."

The listing generation module 106 (and/or the item selection module 116) may use the seller 122's selection to

identify categories to suggest to the seller 122. These are possible categories of the FSO 124 that the seller 122 wishes to sell. The listing generation module 106 may identify categories by conducting a search of the category database 112 using the seller 122's selection. However, such a keyword search by itself may have limited accuracy. Accordingly, in some embodiments, the listing generation module 106 may also or alternatively use artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to predict and suggest categories to the seller 122 based on his selection. For example, the listing generation module 106 may predict categories based on the seller 122's past search history and/or listings 110 (current and past), the search history and/or listings 110 of users who are similar to seller 122, historical information relating to the "Ugg" 204 title input in the screen shot 202 of FIG. 2A, as well as any number of other factors. The operation(s) of predicting and suggesting categories may also include using NER (Named Entity Recognition) to predict/parse the category from the string of text input by the user. NER recognition is based on a learning algorithm that takes tagged inputs as a golden set and extrapolates language. The listing generation module 106 may also use NER technology to predict other product attributes such as brand, color, and size.

The categories identified by the listing generation module 106 are displayed in an example screen shot 208 shown in FIG. 2B. The seller 122 may then select one of these categories. Or, if none of the displayed categories is appropriate for the FSO 124, then the seller 122 may type in a category. The seller 122's action here (that is, selecting one of the displayed, predicted categories or typing in another category) is provided to the listing generation module 106 and/or the item selection module 116, as ML feedback to train and enhance the category selection process, so that predictions of categories are more accurate in the future.

Assume for purposes of example that the seller 122 selects "Boots>Women>Shoes." Once again, the listing generation module 106 (and/or the item selection module 116) may use the seller 122's selection to predict sub-categories of the FSO 124 to suggest to the seller 122. These sub-categories are displayed in a list 210 in FIG. 2C. The operation here as to predicting sub-categories is similar to that associated with FIG. 2B as described above.

Assume for purposes of example that the seller 122 selects "Boots." Based on the seller 122's selection, other questions may be posed to the seller 122. These questions may be selected based on the user's selection, as some questions may be pertinent for some sub-categories but not for others. For the seller 122's selection of "Boots," for example, the listing generation module 106 may request size information as shown in FIG. 2D. Furthermore, based on the seller 122's selection of "Boots," the listing generation module 106 may further request information about the condition of such an item, as shown in FIG. 2E. In both of these figures (FIGS. 2D and 2E), if the user does not wish to provide this information or feels it is not pertinent to this FSO, they may skip past such a screen by clicking on the "Skip" button at the top right right of screenshots 210 and 212 of, FIG. 2D, and FIG. 2E, respectively.

The further questions in 2D and 2E asked by the listing generation module 106 for various FSOs 124 may not be applicable in certain situations. For example, with respect to FIG. 2D, it would not be appropriate for the listing generation module 106 to request the size of the boots from the user if an FSO 124 is a one-size-fits-all product. Furthermore, it may not make sense to ask the user the condition of the item, as in FIG. 2E if, for example, the item is a single-use item.

5

The listing generation module may have such a category attribute (one-size vs. multiple sizes or single use vs. multiple uses) hard-coded for a specific category or sub-category of item in a database under databases **114**. Alternately, if users for such items repeatedly click on the skip button under screenshots **210a/210b** and **212**, this action may be detected by the ML logic and then entered as an attribute under database **114** inductively (e.g., once a certain threshold of users clicking on a skip button is met). Still alternately, in a simple embodiment, if a simple threshold percentage of users click the skip button under FIG. **2D** or **2E**, then a category attribute entry regarding size or use can be made in a corresponding database **114** for such a category, where the making of the category attribute may be inferring that the reason the prompt is being skipped is that the product is of uniform size, multiple uses, etc.

The listing generation module **106** may proceed to display screen shot **214** in FIG. **2F**. Here, the listing generation module **106** may request from the user a time to sale. As will be explained later, the user may utilize a slider **216e** to place importance on Time to Sale, or Feature Matching, as their situation may demand. Feature-matching calculates an optimum time to sale based on similarly listed items under the same or similar categories, condition, brand, demand, price sold, etc. In a situation where the user wants to emphasize more on time to sale (they want to offload inventory immediately), they may not care so much about making sure that the items match the category/brand/demand/price sold exactly, as opposed to selling the item quickly. On the other hand, where time is no issue, the user may be flexible about time to sale and only care about selling in a manner similar to those products which match the features of the device to be sold. Either case represents an endpoint on the slider **216e**, and a user can easily drag the slider to emphasize either feature-matching, or time to sale, as their need may be.

This action sends weights to an aggregate support vector machine (SVM) classifier which will be described in the context of FIGS. **5A-5D**, which reduces the data available to a certain number of data points based on the user's emphasis on both time to sale and feature matching, as decided by the slider **216e**. The data points, as described above, come from similar listings **110** currently active in the ecommerce site **104** in listings database **108**, and/or sold listings **110** stored in the historical database **118**. These data points as an aggregate are reduced by the aggregate SVM classifier to a focused set of sold listings **110** or on sale listings **110** depending on user preferences.

These focused listings are then collectively averaged with regards to time to sale, and the time to sale accordingly is displayed in boxes **216a-216d** with respect to only those historical listings in database **118** that are part of the ultimately reduced data set (only sold items have a definite time to sale). The average listing price of these points can also be determined, but this aspect can be determined with respect to not only the listings **110** in the historical database **118**, but also the listings **110** that are on-sale in the database **108**, as current listings still have a sale price (although it is subject to change by a user).

The user may choose to accept such a default time to sale in FIG. **2F**, in which case they may click the "Next" button at the top right of screenshot **214**. However, if they find the time to be unsuitable for any reason, they may want to change the default time. In this case they can edit the time in boxes **216a** as desired, and then click on the "Next" button at the top right of screenshot **214**. The change in time from

6

the default time is sent as feedback to the ensemble SVM classifier. If the user leaves no entry in the boxes, the default time is used.

The next screen is shown in screenshot **218** of FIG. **2G**. In an embodiment, the features in the feature matching process are weighted equally. However, the user can alter the weights of the features in the feature matching process, which are used in an ensemble classifier that will be described later with regards to FIGS. **5A-5D**. For example, if the user wants to emphasize category because he or she may know that data from similar products and brands is more valuable to the user for determining a prospective time to sale or sale price of their product, they may change the weightings accordingly. In an embodiment, if the user historically has not sold enough of a product category (e.g., it makes lower than a predetermined threshold, such as 10% of their sales), then the default value for Similarity to User Profile **220a** may be 0. In this case, the user per the category emphasis described above may rank Category **220b** as "3," which is higher than Condition **220c** and Demand **220d** ("2"), which are in turn higher than Price Sold **220e** ("1"), which in turn is higher than Similarity to User Profile ("0"). This may result in Category **220b** receiving a weight of 0.444, whereas Condition **220c** and Demand **220d** receive a weight of 0.222 each, and Price Sold **220e** receives a weight of 0.111, making for a total of approximately 1 (the weights always must add up to 1).

These weights are then sent to an ensemble classifier based on user ranking (or default values if the user chooses not to rank them). As will be described, the output of the ensemble classifier results in an aggregate feature matching score for each sold or on-sale listing **110** in the database **108** and **118**. The feature matching score is then fed as an input into the aggregate SVM classifier described above, and ultimately a reduced set of points are determined, per user preferences set in slider **216e**.

To proceed, the user may click the next button at the top right of screenshot **218**, or may click the top left to go back to the previous screen in FIG. **2F**. Once the user proceeds, the screenshot **222** of FIG. **2H** is shown. Here, the listing generation module **106** may suggest a price **224** to the seller **122** for pricing the seller **122**'s FSO **124**. By default, the suggested price **224** may be an average of the ultimately reduced set of points described above (including listings **110** in the historical database **118** as well as currently on-sale listings **110** in the listings database **108**), is shown as default. The user is able to edit the field **224** and write their own item price as desired. The listing generation module **106** may also provide a list **226** of similar items that have recently sold on the ecommerce site **104**. Again, these similar items are provided from the ultimately reduced set of points described above, wherein a predetermined number of listings out of this ultimately reduced set, that are sold and therefore in the historical database **118**, may be chosen at random to show a representative range.

Within the feature matching process, which will be described later, price prediction could also include external data sources for Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP), as well as predictive models about the change in the value of such items over time. Further information regarding automatically determining pricing for the FSO **124** is provided in U.S. application titled "Inventory Ingestion and Pricing System," Ser. No. 16/288,199, filed Feb. 28, 2019, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

The seller **122** may accept the suggested price **224** provided in **222** of FIG. **2H**, by clicking the "Next" button at the

upper right of the screenshot **218**. Alternately, the seller may enter a new price by, for example, selecting the region of the suggested price **224** and typing in a new price in the same region of the user interface shown in screen shot **222**. The seller **122**'s action here (that is, selecting the suggested price **224** or entering a new price) is provided to the listing generation module **106** and/or the item selection module **116**, as ML feedback to the ensemble SVM classifier to train and enhance the price generation process, so that price generation is more accurate in the future.

The listing generation module **106** will monitor this listing **110** as to whether or not it sells, how long it takes to sell, the listing price versus the actual sell price, etc., and provide this information as ML feedback to further train and enhance the price generation process to better match a prospective user's future needs.

Finally, the listing generation module **106** may generate a listing **110** for the FSO **124**, based on the foregoing processing and information. An example listing **110** (shown as **228**) is shown in FIG. **2I**. The seller **122** may modify the listing **228**, such as inputting pictures **230** or editing any of the description fields **232**.

It is noted that the first embodiment of FIGS. **2A-2I** requires the seller **122** to manually select the category as well as other information. This requirement may be a burden on some sellers **122** who are inexperienced with creating listings **110** or who are not familiar with the FSO **124** they wish to sell. A second embodiment shown in FIGS. **3A-3E** addresses this issue. The feature matching process, time to sale process, and slider **216e** of FIGS. **2A-2I**, may also be implemented in the process of FIGS. **3A-3E**.

FIG. **3A** illustrates screen shot **302**, where a seller **122** may provide a short title **304** of the FSO **124** he wishes to sell. The listing generation module **106** may use the title **304** to search the category database **112** and/or the other databases **114** to predict possible products and/or product categories of the FSO **124**, which are displayed as **306**. The seller **122** may select one of the items from this list **206**. Assume, for purposes of example, that the seller **122** selected "Ugg boots."

In the process described above with respect to FIGS. **2A-2I**, the seller **122** was then required to select a category (FIG. **2B**) and sub-category (FIG. **2C**) for the FSO **124**. But in the process of FIGS. **3A-3E**, the listing generation module **106** and/or the item selection module **116** uses AI and ML to predict and determine one or more items **310** to present to the seller **122**. In this case, after the screenshot **302**, the time to sale and feature weighting screens of FIGS. **2F** and **2G** may be shown in the same manner to the seller, and based on the data input in these screens, as with the process of FIGS. **2A-2I**, the data of all listings **110** that are on-sale within database **108** or historical listings **110** in database **118** that were sold may be narrowed down to an ultimately reduced data set. A predetermined number of listings **110** from this ultimately reduced data set, that are sold and therefore in the historical database **118**, as shown in FIG. **2H**, may be chosen at random to be shown to the seller in FIG. **3B**. Such items **310** are ones that have been predicted to match or be similar to the seller **122**'s FSO **124**, per individual seller preferences regarding time to sale v. feature matching, and the weights of different features in the feature matching.

The seller **122** may select one of these items **310**, and the selected item is used as a template to automatically generate the listing **110** for the FSO **124**. If none of the items **310** is similar to the FSO **124**, then the seller **122** may key in information pertaining to the FSO **124** (to thereby manually

create a listing **110**). The seller **122**'s action here (that is, selecting one of the displayed items **310** or manually typing in information) is provided to the listing generation module **106** and/or the item selection module **116**, as ML feedback to train and enhance the item selection process, so that predictions are more accurate in the future.

The listing generation module **106** may pose additional questions to the seller **122**, such as a request to enter the condition of the FSO **124**. This is shown in FIG. **3C**.

Thereafter, the listing generation module **106** may display the screen shot **314** shown in FIG. **3D**. Here, the listing generation module **106** may generate and suggest a price to the seller **122** for pricing the FSO **124**. As discussed above, the listing generation module **106** may generate the price based on the category, size, condition, and time for sale of the FSO **124**, as well as the current price of similar listings **110** currently active in the ecommerce site **104**, and/or the actual sell price of sold listings **110** stored in the historical database **118**. Further information regarding automatically determining pricing for the FSO **124** is provided in U.S. application titled "Inventory Ingestion and Pricing System," Ser. No. 16/288,199, filed Feb. 28, 2019, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

The seller **122** may accept the suggested price provided in **314**, or enter a new price, in an analogous manner as described with respect to FIG. **2G** above. The seller **122**'s action here (that is, selecting the suggested price or entering a new price) is provided to the listing generation module **106** and/or the item selection module **116**, as ML feedback to train and enhance the price generation process, so that price generation is more accurate in the future.

Finally, the listing generation module **106** may generate a listing **110** for the FSO **124**, based on the foregoing processing and information. An example listing **110** (shown as **316**) is shown in FIG. **3E**. The listing generation module **106** generates the listing **316** using and importing information from an existing listing **110** corresponding to the selected item (from FIG. **3B**) and the predicted price (from FIG. **3D**), and/or the condition of the FSO **124** (from FIG. **3C**) as well as the time to sale (which may be asked in a manner similar to that of FIG. **2F** in the embodiments of FIG. **3**) which can be asked to the user. In this manner, the listing generation module **106** has automatically generated a listing **110** that is complete, accurate and of consistently high quality.

The listing generation module **106** will monitor this listing **316** as to whether or not it sells, how long it takes to sell, the listing price versus the actual sell price, etc., and provide this information as ML feedback to further train and enhance the item selection engine and process, and/or the automatic pricing selection engine and process.

FIGS. **4A** and **4B** represent an alternative use case for the technologies illustrated in FIGS. **1**, **2A-2I** and/or **3A-3E**, according to some embodiments. This use case enables a seller **122** to determine whether to list a FSO **124** for sale on the ecommerce site **104**.

In a screen shot **402** shown in FIG. **4A**, a seller **122** can provide a short title **404** for a FSO **124** she is considering selling. Using the processing and functions described above, the listing generation module **106** and/or item selection module **116** may identify similar items in current and/or sold listings **110**. The listing generation module **106** may display an average price **406** of those listings **110** to the seller **122**. For sold listings **110**, the listing generation module **106** may also display the average selling time **408** and the actual shipping costs **410**.

The listing generation module **106** may also indicate the predicted demand **411** of this item on the ecommerce site

104 (such as high demand, medium demand, low demand, etc.). The listing generation module **106** may predict the demand level based on how many similar items are currently for sale (unsold) on the ecommerce site **104**, how fast sold listings **110** in the historical database **118** sold, the sellability scores of similar items (that is, the first sellability scores for active listings **110**, and the second sellability scores for sold listings **110**), search histories of users (that is, whether users are searching for this item), etc. Other factors involved with demand prediction may include any of: existing number of listings, average STR (sell through rate) of the item, number of users searching for such items, user engagement with such items (including views, likes, save searches), time it takes to sell such items, external market signals of demand (such as google trends), and/or price of such items relative to other similar ones in the marketplace.

The seller **122** may enter a condition **412** of his or her FSO **124** to focus the demand prediction **411** on just items of that condition **412**. The seller **122** can also enter a time to sale in box **418** as an optional input. The time to sale in box **418** may take the form of another pop up prompt which mirrors the input boxes of FIG. 2F, wherein a default time may be input in the boxes in the same way (a default weighting of features for feature matching may be used; alternately, if “Feature Matching” is clicked on the slider **418**, a pop-up prompt mirroring the input boxes of FIG. 2G may appear, enabling the user to input custom weighting of the feature rankings). If entered, this input can focus the demand prediction **411** on items to be sold within such a time range and based on custom feature matching weights, in the same manner of FIGS. 2A-2I and FIGS. 3A-3E, resulting in an ultimately reduced data set from an aggregate SVM classifier, wherein the demand of all of these data points (including historical listings **110** in database **118** as on-sale listings **110** have not been sold yet and are therefore difficult to adjudge demand for) may be averaged, resulting in a score which falls under the category of low demand, medium demand, or high demand, as will be explained. Other components, can also be altered based on such an optional input **418**, wherein similar items sold, shown in area **416**, may only be narrowed to have sold times that correspond to the time to sale desired in **418**, and are chosen in the same manner as described above with respect to FIGS. 2H and 3B. The average price **406** may also be changed accordingly to reflect these similar items. The listing generation module **106** may display items **416** that are predicted to be similar to the FSO **124**, that are in the condition **412** selected by the seller **122**, and that recently sold. The seller **122** may focus this list of items **416** based on price range **414**, time to sale **418**, etc.

In a similar manner, the listing generation module **106** may identify items that are in high demand on the ecommerce site **104** (irrespective of any user search), and display a list **422** of those high demand items to users. This is shown in FIG. 4B.

FIG. 5 illustrates a operational flow diagram for a method **502** for the intelligent creation of consistently high quality listings for selling FSOs on an ecommerce site, according to some embodiments. Method **502** can be performed by processing logic that can comprise hardware (e.g., circuitry, dedicated logic, programmable logic, microcode, etc.), software (e.g., instructions executing on a processing device), or a combination thereof. It is to be appreciated that not all steps may be needed to perform the disclosure provided herein. Further, some of the steps may be performed simultaneously, or in a different order than shown in FIG. 5, as will be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art.

Method **502** shall be described with reference to FIGS. 1, 2A-2I, 3A-3E and 4A-4B. However, method **502** is not limited to those example embodiments.

In **504**, a user (such as a seller **122**) may enter a keyword (KW). For example, the seller **122** may enter a short title such as in FIG. 2A, 3A or 4A. The keyword may describe a FSO **124** the seller **122** wishes to sell, or is considering to sell.

In **506**, the listing generation module **106** and/or the item selection module **116** may generate predictions to identify the FSO **124**. For example, the listing generation module **106** may generate predictions of the category and/or product of the FSO **124**. In some embodiments, the listing generation module **106** will generate a prediction of demand of the FSO **124**; this is shown in FIG. 4A. Such operation is described above.

The module used to generate such predictions will herein be described. In an embodiment such a module may be a neural network with hidden layers and backpropagation as shown in FIG. 5B. The inputs in this case would be the keyword or keywords that the user is typing into a prompt (e.g. the prompt **204** in FIG. 2A or **304** in FIG. 3A). The neural network may be used as a machine learning classifier for these inputs to designate a potential category or categories of products. By using such a classification technique, it may be possible to create a system of nodes with weights. This system of nodes with weights may be used to give a reliable prediction of the category or categories the user's input belongs to. The different components of the neural network model shown in FIG. 5B will herein be explained, according to some embodiments. The input layer **524** contains nodes 1 to i, which represent inputs into the model. Each of these nodes corresponds to a different aspect of the string entered. In particular, the user's string, as inputted in **204**, **304**, etc., is first tokenized into words, and the tokenized words are stemmed. Training data may be used (where the category is known), where full sentence descriptions of the product may be transformed. Such a transformation may tokenize each word in sentence descriptions of a known category, create word stems, etc. After enough training data is used, there may be a collective library of word stems, some of which are associated with only one category, some associated with multiple categories, etc., such that when an input string in **204** or **304** is parsed apart, where one input node may correspond to each word, these nodes can be compared to the library of word stems associated with each category.

For example, if Ugg Boots is a company headquartered in Australia, the stem ‘Aus’ may be in the library of word stems array associated with the category “Ugg Boots.” Thus if the user enters “Wearable contraption from Australia” as the input string **204/304**, node 1 of the input layer **524** may represent the word stem “Wear”, node 2 may represent “contraption”, node 3 may represent “from,” and node 4 may represent the word stem “Aus.” These nodes may then be compared to the word stems from the training library (called “bag of words”), wherein nodes 1 through 3 maybe assigned the value 0 if they do not match up with any word stems in the bag of words, and node 4 may be assigned the value 1 if it does match up with a word stem in the bag of words (in this example it matches ‘Aus’ from above). In practical terms, the input is parsed through and correlated with a series of 0's and 1's where 1's correspond to words that are in the bag of words.

Through repeated rounds of the neural network being trained with training data, each stem may have a different weight w_{ij} associated with the stem going to the next layer,

11

and eventually to the output layer **528**. This is because some words in the bag of words may have an association with particular companies and categories and may be more important than others. For example, the word “from” or other prepositions may be deemed to be less important than word stems like “Aus” which signal a headquarter location of a company. Output layer **528** may include two nodes as an example, node 1 and node 2, representing two categories. Node 1 may correspond to a category of “Ugg Boots,” node 2 may correspond to a category of “X Boots,” and there may be multiple nodes in this manner.

Based on the inputs and weights from each node to the other (w_{ij} as shown in FIG. 5B), the results of the output layer are tabulated, and the node (1 or 2) in the output layer with the greater result is outputted as the outcome of the predictive analysis. In this case, since ‘Aus’ may have a particular association with Ugg Boots (if Ugg Boots is headquartered there as in the hypothetical example described above), the weights from the input layer node 4 to the output layer node 1 may carry more weight than from the input layer node 4 to the output layer node 2. This is because “X Boots” may not have a headquarters in Australia, and thus the word stem association of “Aus” with training data comprising sentence descriptions about “X Boots” is not as strong.

In traversing from the input layer **524** to the output layer **528**, there may also be several hidden layers **526** present. The number of hidden layers **526** may be preset at one or may be a plurality of layers. If the number of hidden layers **526** is one (such as shown in FIG. 5B), the number of neurons in the hidden layer may be calculated as the mean of the number of neurons in the input and output layers. This is derived from an empirically-based rule of thumb in ease of calculating weights across layers. According to an additional rule of thumb, in an embodiment to prevent overfitting, where the number of neurons in input layer **524** is N_i and the number of neurons in the output layer is N_o , and the number of samples in the training data set of all word stems associated with categories is N_s , then the number of neurons N_h in one hidden layer may be kept below

$$N_h = \frac{N_s}{(\alpha * (N_i + N_o))}, \quad (\text{equation 1})$$

where α is a scaling factor (typically ranging from 2-10). In this manner, the number of free parameters in the model may be limited to a small portion of the degrees of freedom in the training data, in order to prevent overfitting.

From the input layer, based on the weights from each node in the input layer **524** to the hidden layer **526** shown in FIG. 5B, there may be a sigmoidal transfer function in going from the input layer **524** to the hidden layer **526**. Initially, the weights $w_{i,j}$ may be initialized to random values between 0 and 1. An input node word-stem that corresponds to a word stem in the bag of words may then be propagated according to these weights (forward-propagation), wherein the hidden layer **526** forms the first outputs for the neurons of the input layer **524**. For example, inputs given as neuron 1 and 2 in the input layer **524** in the example above would be multiplied respectively by 0 because they do not correspond to a word stem in the bag of words.

By contrast, neuron 4 would be multiplied by weights $w_{4,1}$ and $w_{4,2}$, etc., until $w_{4,j}$, respectively, and in the same manner these hidden layer nodes would be summed to form the output to the hidden layer **604A** (e.g. node 1 in the hidden

12

layer in the example above would be the sum of $w_{1,1}+w_{2,1}+w_{3,1}+w_{4,1}=w_{4,1}$ since only node 4 has a word stem in the bag of words). Then the node 1 at the hidden layer **526** may take this net value and transfer this activation value to see what the neuron output onwards to the output layer actually is. At each output layer (hidden layer **526** with respect to input layer **524**, and output layer **528** with respect to hidden layer **526**) transfer functions comprising the sigmoid activation function

$$S(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-x}},$$

hyperbolic tangent function

$$\tanh x = \frac{e^{2x} - 1}{e^{2x} + 1},$$

or smooth rectified linear unit (SmoothReLU) function $f(x)=\log(1+ex)$ may be used to transfer outputs.

In the example above, the output given from the input layer **524** to neuron 1 of the hidden layer **526** would be inputted as the activation value to be transferred at the hidden layer **526** to one of the transfer functions described above, and the output would form the value of neuron 1 of the hidden layer **526** to be given onward as input to the output layer **528**, and multiplied by respective weights to the neurons 1 and 2 of the output layer. In this manner, full forward propagation of input nodes 1 through I in the input layer **524** may be achieved to the output layer **528**.

Then, to conduct backpropagation, error is calculated between the expected outputs and the outputs forward propagated from the network. In training the neural network, k-fold cross validation, may be used, particularly when the data sets are small. For k-fold cross-validation, for example, there could be an aggregated set of sentence descriptions all input by the user that are known to be associated with Ugg Boots (Category 1) or X Boots (Category 2) with respect to different associated word stems for each group, comprising all the components described above. This set of sentence descriptions may be shuffled and split into a k number of groups (e.g., 5 groups if k is 5, each holding a particular number of results (Category 1/Category 2) and corresponding associated word stems). Then, for each unique group, the group can be held out as a test data set, with the remaining groups of aggregated sentence descriptions being used to train the classifier.

Finally, based on the training, the accuracy with respect to the test group can be evaluated. One group may be held for testing and the others may be used to train the model. In so training, a ‘1’ value is reserved for neuron 1 and a ‘0’ value is reserved for neuron 2 of the output layer **528** if the result is ‘Ugg boots’ for the category associated with the user input. Conversely a ‘0’ value is reserved for neuron 1 and a ‘1’ value is reserved for neuron 2 if the result is a ‘X boots’ for the category associated with user input. In this manner, error is calculated between the expected outputs of 1,0 so described, and the outputs actually forward propagated by the network (initially by random weights assigned as described above).

In addition, if the user enters their own category as described above, the new category may be included as a new output node with a ‘1’ value, and the rest of the output nodes may receive a ‘0’ value. To transfer the error, the error signal

13

to propagate backwards through the network is given by $\text{error} = (\text{expected} - \text{output}) * \text{transfer_derivative}(\text{output})$, wherein $\text{transfer_derivative}$ is the derivative of the transfer function used (sigmoid, hyperbolic, or SmoothReLU).

The error signal for a neuron in the hidden layer **526** is then calculated as the weighted error of each neuron in the output layer, according to the weights from the output layer to the neuron in the hidden layer **526**. Similarly, the error signal from the hidden layer is then propagated back to the input layer **524**. Once the errors are calculated for each neuron in the network via the back propagation method described, the errors are used to update the weights according to the formula $\text{new_weight} = \text{old_weight} + \text{learning_rate} * \text{error} * \text{input}$. Here, the old_weight variable is the previous given weight in the model, the learning_rate variable is a value from 0 to 1 that specifies how much to change the old weight to correct for the error, the error variable is the error calculated by the backpropagation procedure, and the input variable is the value of the input that caused the error.

Over time, this model can be developed to form a robust prediction analysis. As for a given input there are probably several potential output categories, the output layer **528** may consist of tens or even hundreds of nodes. Each output node in the end has a score from 0 to 1. The output node with the largest node is deemed to be the most likely category of product which the user's input (e.g. in field **204** or **304**) may be associated with. Accordingly, the second-highest score would denote the second most likely category of product associated with the user's input, and so on. Following this logic, for example, the top 4 to 5 most likely categories associated with a user's input may be shown, e.g., in field **206** of FIG. 2A or field **306** of FIG. 3A, etc.

Once these categories are displayed, the user may or may not select a category. If the user does select a category, then a value of '1' is input into the output layer, and the other categories become '0', and this result is backpropagated as described above to adjust the weights of the hidden and input layer to make the model more robust for future processing. Then, if a category is picked by the user, the previous corresponding input string from field **204** or **304** is again input into a further neural network model similar to FIG. 5B, wherein this further neural network model may be specific only to a particular type of category.

Thus, for each category, there may be a further neural network model with a further bag of words, with particular word stems associated with particular features. For example "as-is" may be associated with a "fair" condition, "brand" (of brand new) may be associated with "like new" condition, etc. In this manner, using the same logic with the previous neural network, subcategories may be correlated to a user input, and used further in feature matching which will be described (this corresponds to the embodiment of FIG. 3 above, which instead of asking the user for conditions as in the embodiment of FIG. 2, deduces subcategories from the entered words).

Once the categories and subcategories are either chosen (or not chosen) by the user, the process may advance to block **508**. In **508**, the feature matching is conducted, according to FIG. 5C, the result of the feature matching is fed to the aggregate SVM classifier in FIG. 5D, and listings **110** in the historical database **118** or on-sale listings in the listings database **108**, that are related to the category chosen by the user (or the most likely category if not chosen by the user) are narrowed down to an ultimately reduced set of listings. The listing generation module **106** may display the items (that is, the predicted items) from this process in **508**.

14

This is shown in FIGS. 2H, 3B, and 4A. The listing generation module **106** (working with the item selection module **116**) may have selected these items for display based on their predicted match or similarity to the seller **122**'s FSO **124**.

In **510**, the seller **122** provides a condition of the FSO **124**. This is shown in FIGS. 2E, 3C and 4A. The seller **122** may be asked to provide additional information (depending on the category of the FSO **124**) in some embodiments, such as size, condition, or time-to-sale. An example of this is shown in FIG. 2D. Based on such a condition, the list of terms may be re-shown dynamically (at regular or irregular intervals) and thus a back and forth flow of data from **508** to **510** is shown.

The feature-matching process will be described, according to an embodiment, when the seller has finished providing conditions of the FSO **124** including a condition of the product, category of the product, and a preference of time to sale vs. feature matching using e.g., slider **216e** of FIG. 2F or slider **418** of FIG. 4A. In this case, an ensemble classifier of FIG. 5C is used on every point of input data **530**. In this case, input data comprises listings **110** in the historical database **118** or on-sale listings in listings database **108**. The entire output layer of category scores from the previous neural network model to determine category are used in **532b**, wherein for a sample listing **110** in the input data **530**, the scores based on the user input from field **204/304** may be correlated with the category of the sample listing **110**.

For example, if the second most-likely score in the category-determining neural network as described above has an output value of 0.8, and a sample listing **110** belongs to the second-most likely category, then the value of the sample listing in node **532b** is 0.8. For Demand **532a**, this value is the output of another neural network of the type described in FIG. 5B. In particular, nodes in the input layer **524** for such a neural network model to determine demand include how many similar items are currently for sale (unsold) on the ecommerce site **104** (e.g., of the same category as the sample listing **110**), how fast sold listings **110** in the historical database **118** of the same category as the sample listing sold, the sellability scores of items in the same category as the sample listing **110** (that is, the first sellability scores for active listings **110**, and the second sellability scores for sold listings **110**), frequency of the item of the sample listing in search histories of users of ecommerce site **104** (that is, whether users are searching for this item), etc.

Each of these input nodes, may be represented proportionately, as a value from 0 to 1. Other factors involved with demand prediction may include external market signals of demand (such as google trends), and/or price of such items relative to other similar ones in the marketplace. There may be a single node 1 in the output layer **528**, wherein a value of 0-0.333 in node 1 may indicate "Low Demand," a value of 0.333-0.666 may indicate "Medium Demand," and a value of 0.666-0.999 may indicate "High Demand."

In this manner, a numerical value from the output layer of this neural network may be determined for each listing **110** of the input data **530**. After such a numerical value is determined, it may be compared to the average numerical value over all listings **110** in the input data **530** that are of the same category as the user-input in field **204** or **304** (either the category that the user chose, or the top-most likely category as determined by the neural network model that determines category as described above). In this manner, the proximity of a listing **110** to an average of the listings **110** of the same category as the user's to-be-prepared listing may be reported as a ratio in **532a**. Such a ratio might be set equal

15

to the absolute value of the demand score of listing 110 subtracted by the average of the demand score of listings 110 of the same category as the user-input in field 204/304, divided by the average of the demand score of listings 110 of the same category as the user-input in field 204/304.

In the same manner, the numerical value of the price sold may be determined for each listing 110 of the input data 530, by comparison to the average numerical value over all listings 110 in the input data 530 that are of the same category as the user-input in field 204 or 304 (by taking the absolute value of the difference between the price sold of the listing 110 and the average price sold of all listings 110 of the same category as the user input, and dividing this absolute value by the average price sold of all listings 110 of the same category as the user input).

The condition of 532d is assumed to be specified by the user for the purposes of this exemplary embodiment. That is the user has specified as depicted in FIG. 4A element 412 whether the condition is “New,” “Like New,” “Good,” “Fair,” or “Poor.” In an embodiment this may be treated as a sliding scale. That is, the condition of a sample listing 110 of input data 530, for each sample listing in the input data 530, may be compared to the user-specified condition for the object to-be sold, along the sliding scale, and assessed a score accordingly.

For example, if a condition of a listing is the same along the sliding scale as the user-specified condition, it may receive a score of 1. If a condition of a listing is adjacent along the sliding scale (e.g. if the listing is ‘Like New’ or ‘Fair’ if the user-specified condition is ‘Good’ or vice versa), it may receive a score of 0.4. If a condition of a listing is separated by at least one condition along the sliding scale (e.g. if the listing is ‘New’ or ‘Poor’ if the user-specified condition is ‘Good’ or vice versa), it may receive a score of 0. These scores can be changed, but in general, a listing 110 condition closer to the user-specified condition on the sliding scale may receive a greater score than a listing 110 condition that is farther away.

As with the Demand 532a field in the ensemble classifier of FIG. 5C, the Similarity 532e field may also be a neural network model of the type shown in FIG. 5B. As mentioned above, it may first be assessed whether the user has sold at least a predetermined threshold percentage of the type of product of the category chosen by the user (or the top-most likely category as determined by the neural network model above in the case the user has not chosen a category).

For example, if the user has only previously sold 5% of a category of product that the user is now preparing a listing for, it may not be useful to compare listings 110 with this data, as such data is too little to be meaningful. If such a threshold is not surpassed, the value of 532e may be 0. If the threshold is passed, then demand and price sold (corresponding to input 532a and 532c) may be used in a neural network model for similarity 532e.

In this case, values are not calculated with respect to the average of all listings 110 in the same category as the one chosen by the user (or the top-most likely category determined by the previously described neural network model for category-determination if the user has not chosen a category). Instead, values for Demand 532a and Price Sold 532c are calculated with respect to the average of listings 110 in the same category as the one chosen by the user of the listings that the user has previously sold. One node, node 1, is used in the output layer 528 of such a neural network model, where a score of 0-1 is generated at the output layer. A score closer to 1 indicates high similarity whereas a score closer to 0 indicates low similarity.

16

Thus all elements 532a-532e may be generated. These elements may be weighted by a combining decision rule 534. For example, such a decision rule may incorporate custom weights given by a user that wants to prioritize certain features over others when generating an overall feature-matching score. By default, all elements 532a-532e (assuming the threshold percentage mentioned above is surpassed for 532e) may be weighted to be equal. Over time, if such a weightage is generating product listings that are not selling, as described above, the listing is monitored until it does sell (if it does), and a difference in these five metrics (e.g. if the final listing had a higher price sold, etc.) can be assessed, and the default weights tweaked accordingly (e.g., to increase the weightage of the price sold by default if a product’s ability to sell is more sensitive to price than equal weightage).

The values of the fields 532a-532e are then multiplied by their respective weights, according to the combining decision rule 534, and the collective sum is designated as the feature matching score 536. Ideally, a first product listing 110 (in the historical database 118 or on-sale product listing in the database 108) that is closer to the product the user desires to sell in several features than another product listing 110, it should have a higher feature-matching score 536.

However, proximity of product is not the only concern for a seller. In particular, a seller’s plans can be very time sensitive, and that is why the inclusion of sliders 216e and 418 are helpful in this regard. For example, the user can set the degree to which they prefer to minimize the time to sale at the cost of product proximity, or vice versa (preferring proximity of product listings even at the cost of long times to sale).

The helpfulness of this feature is illustrated with reference to an example in FIG. 5D. In particular, the feature-matching score, and the time to sale of each listing 110 present can be fed to a further aggregate support vector machine (SVM) classifier, which is illustrated in FIG. 5D. Both the feature-matching score and the time to sale for every listing 110 in the historical database 118 can be plotted in FIG. 5D. Then, the support vector machine (SVM) technique is used to determine the best hyperplane based on the user’s preferences to narrow the listings 110 to an ultimately reduced set.

In particular, the hyperplane is determined by minimizing the difference between two classes. By default, the hyperplane may be set to line 538, which clearly splits apart Sub-Category 1 and Sub-Category 2. Following the example described above, the user may be looking to sell a pair of boots (category is boots), wherein sub-category 1 may be “Ugg Boots,” and sub-category 2 may be “Nike Boots”. When the slider is dragged all the way to the right (clear preference to feature-matching score), then line 538 would be the result of the classifier. However, if time for sale is important for the user, then the user is not capturing more data points where a sale occurred more quickly and is rather incorporating an entire cluster of sub-category 1 points with an excessively long time to sale, as shown on the right side of the Figure.

On the other hand, if the user drags the slider 216e or 418 (or analogous slider present in embodiments of FIG. 3) all the way to the left side, the hyperplane would be split at line 540. In this manner, the user incorporates a substantial number of points that capture a minimal time to sale, but there is a large feature-matching score variation in these points. Lines 542 and 544 show two situations in between, wherein 542 describes a situation where the slider might be

17

dragged closer to “Time to Sale” and line **544** describes a situation where the slider might be dragged closer to “Feature-matching score.”

In this case, line **544** might describe the best situation for the user, wherein the user can minimize the incorporation of data points with a large time to sale, while at the same time also minimizing a large spread in feature-matching score. Thus the user can freely manipulate the slider to target clusters of data which are uniquely suited to the users needs. In this case, by moving the slider and shifting the hyperplane determined by the SVM so as to target the cluster of points above the line **544**, the user is able to not only minimize time to sale but also gather data for points that are in close proximity to the product being sold on the basis of feature-matching score.

In this case, these points would be averaged to determine average price, displayed e.g., in field **224** of FIG. 2H, and the average time to sale, which would be displayed in FIG. 2G. Thus by skewing the data to capture a beneficial cluster in both dimensions can enable the highest sale price while setting an optimal time to sale, resulting in the most efficient sale for the user.

Furthermore, in an embodiment, the items displayed in list **226** or list **416** may be the points that are closest to the line (e.g. line **544**). In this manner as distance is minimized from the hyper plane, an optimal balance of feature matching and time to sale can be struck. For example, the 4 points closest to the line **544**, representing listings **110** in the historical database **118** may be listed in list **226** or list **416** as the most relevant listings **110** for a viewer to see.

The hyperplane is illustrated in two-dimensions, but the same principle can be used in multiple dimensions. For example, in a 3-dimensional embodiment, demand may be used not in the ensemble classifier of FIG. 5C, but in a hyperplane. In this embodiment the feature matching score (without demand **532a**), along with the result of demand **532a** as a separate entity, and time to sale is fed to an aggregate SVM classifier. The user’s preference according to sliders **216e** and **418** may include an additional slider of “Demand” on one side, and “Feature Matching” on the other side, in the same manner as the slider between “Time to Sale and Feature Matching” shown in **216e**.

Then, in this case, if the user cares more about whether a product will sell rather than how proximate it is to a product for which a listing is being created, and if the user also wants to minimize a time to sale, a hyperplane in 3-dimensions may be generated accordingly. This hyperplane would seek to be low on the axis corresponding to time to sale, high on the axis corresponding to demand, and high on the axis corresponding to feature-matching score. Thus an optimal cluster of points can again be targeted by the user, and the set of listings can accordingly be optimally reduced.

In **512**, the listing generation module **106** may generate a price prediction for the FSO **124**, in the manner described above, based on the ultimately reduced set of listings, and averaging the price of these listings. This is shown in FIGS. 2H, 3D, and 4A. The seller **122** may accept this suggested price, or enter a new price for the FSO **124**.

In **514**, the listing generation module **106** automatically generates and displays a completed listing **110** for the seller **122**’s FSO **124**. Examples of this listing **110** are shown in FIGS. 2H and 3E. In other use case embodiments, the listing generation module **106** may display the information from the above steps in other formats, such as in FIG. 4A where the predicted demand **411** for the FSO **124** is displayed.

In **516**, the seller **122** may accept the listing **110** that was generated by the listing generation module **106**, or make any

18

desired edits. At that point, the listing **110** is posted as active and available for purchase on the ecommerce site **104**.

As indicated by **518**, method **502** is a closed loop process. The listing generation module **106** may monitor the listing **110** as to whether it sells, does not sell, how long it takes to sell, whether it sells at the predicted price or lower, etc. This information is provided as ML feedback to further train and enhance the associated AI prediction processes and engines. This is indicated by **520** and **522**. The sellability module **119** may also update the associated sellability scores (that is, the second sellability scores) with this information, as discussed above.

Example Computer System

Various embodiments and/or components therein can be implemented, for example, using one or more computer systems, such as computer system **600** shown in FIG. 6. Computer system **600** can be any computer or computing device capable of performing the functions described herein. For example, one or more computer systems **600** or portions thereof can be used to implement any of the embodiments described herein, and/or any combination or sub-combination thereof.

Computer system **600** includes one or more processors (also called central processing units, or CPUs), such as a processor **604**. Processor **604** is connected to a communication infrastructure or bus **606**.

One or more processors **604** can each be a graphics processing unit (GPU). In some embodiments, a GPU is a processor that is a specialized electronic circuit designed to process mathematically intensive applications. The GPU can have a parallel structure that is efficient for parallel processing of large blocks of data, such as mathematically intensive data common to computer graphics applications, images, videos, etc.

Computer system **600** also includes user input/output device(s) **603**, such as monitors, keyboards, pointing devices, etc., that communicate with communication infrastructure **606** through user input/output interface(s) **602**.

Computer system **600** also includes a main or primary memory **608**, such as random access memory (RAM). Main memory **608** can include one or more levels of cache. Main memory **608** has stored therein control logic (i.e., computer software) and/or data.

Computer system **600** can also include one or more secondary storage devices or memory **610**. Secondary memory **610** can include, for example, a hard disk drive **612** and/or a removable storage device or drive **614**. Removable storage drive **614** can be a floppy disk drive, a magnetic tape drive, a compact disk drive, an optical storage device, tape backup device, and/or any other storage device/drive.

Removable storage drive **614** can interact with a removable storage unit **618**. Removable storage unit **618** includes a computer usable or readable storage device having stored thereon computer software (control logic) and/or data. Removable storage unit **618** can be a floppy disk, magnetic tape, compact disk, DVD, optical storage disk, and/or any other computer data storage device. Removable storage drive **614** reads from and/or writes to removable storage unit **618** in a well-known manner.

According to an exemplary embodiment, secondary memory **610** can include other means, instrumentalities or other approaches for allowing computer programs and/or other instructions and/or data to be accessed by computer system **600**. Such means, instrumentalities or other approaches can include, for example, a removable storage

unit **622** and an interface **620**. Examples of the removable storage unit **622** and the interface **620** can include a program cartridge and cartridge interface (such as that found in video game devices), a removable memory chip (such as an EPROM or PROM) and associated socket, a memory stick and USB port, a memory card and associated memory card slot, and/or any other removable storage unit and associated interface.

Computer system **600** can further include a communication or network interface **624**. Communication interface **624** enables computer system **600** to communicate and interact with any combination of remote devices, remote networks, remote entities, etc. (individually and collectively referenced by reference number **628**). For example, communication interface **624** can allow computer system **600** to communicate with remote devices **628** over communications path **626**, which can be wired and/or wireless, and which can include any combination of LANs, WANs, the Internet, etc. Control logic and/or data can be transmitted to and from computer system **600** via communication path **626**.

In some embodiments, a non-transitory, tangible apparatus or article of manufacture comprising a tangible computer useable or readable medium having control logic (software) stored thereon is also referred to herein as a computer program product or program storage device. This includes, but is not limited to, computer system **600**, main memory **608**, secondary memory **610**, and removable storage units **618** and **622**, as well as tangible articles of manufacture embodying any combination of the foregoing. Such control logic, when executed by one or more data processing devices (such as computer system **600**), causes such data processing devices to operate as described herein.

Based on the teachings contained in this disclosure, it will be apparent to persons skilled in the relevant art(s) how to make and use embodiments of this disclosure using data processing devices, computer systems and/or computer architectures other than that shown in FIG. **6**. In particular, embodiments can operate with software, hardware, and/or operating system implementations other than those described herein.

CONCLUSION

It is to be appreciated that the Detailed Description section, and not the Summary and Abstract sections, is intended to be used to interpret the claims. The Summary and Abstract sections can set forth one or more but not all exemplary embodiments as contemplated by the inventors, and thus, are not intended to limit this disclosure or the appended claims in any way.

While this disclosure describes exemplary embodiments for exemplary fields and applications, it should be understood that the disclosure is not limited thereto. Other embodiments and modifications thereto are possible, and are within the scope and spirit of this disclosure. For example, and without limiting the generality of this paragraph, embodiments are not limited to the software, hardware, firmware, and/or entities illustrated in the figures and/or described herein. Further, embodiments (whether or not explicitly described herein) have significant utility to fields and applications beyond the examples described herein.

Embodiments have been described herein with the aid of functional building blocks illustrating the implementation of specified functions and relationships thereof. The boundaries of these functional building blocks have been arbitrarily defined herein for the convenience of the description. Alternate boundaries can be defined as long as the specified

functions and relationships (or equivalents thereof) are appropriately performed. Also, alternative embodiments can perform functional blocks, steps, operations, methods, etc. using orderings different than those described herein.

References herein to “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” “an example embodiment,” or similar phrases, indicate that the embodiment described can include a particular feature, structure, or characteristic, but every embodiment can not necessarily include the particular feature, structure, or characteristic. Moreover, such phrases are not necessarily referring to the same embodiment. Further, when a particular feature, structure, or characteristic is described in connection with an embodiment, it would be within the knowledge of persons skilled in the relevant art(s) to incorporate such feature, structure, or characteristic into other embodiments whether or not explicitly mentioned or described herein. Additionally, some embodiments can be described using the expression “coupled” and “connected” along with their derivatives. These terms are not necessarily intended as synonyms for each other. For example, some embodiments can be described using the terms “connected” and/or “coupled” to indicate that two or more elements are in direct physical or electrical contact with each other. The term “coupled,” however, can also mean that two or more elements are not in direct contact with each other, but yet still co-operate or interact with each other.

The breadth and scope of this disclosure should not be limited by any of the above-described exemplary embodiments, but should be defined only in accordance with the following claims and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A computer implemented method, comprising:

receiving, by at least one processor, user input from a user related to a “for sale object” (FSO);

predicting, by the at least one processor, using a neural network machine learning classifier, a list of product categories that are likely to describe the FSO, wherein a neural network comprises an input layer including one or more nodes that represent an input into a model of the neural network, an output layer indicating the list of product categories, and one or more hidden layers between the input layer and the output layer, wherein one or more node weights are applied to the input to the model between the input layer and transfer to the one or more hidden layers;

receiving, by the at least one processor, the user input corresponding to a selection of one of the list of product categories;

displaying, on a user interface, a slider comprising a hyperplane adjustable by the user between a time-to-sale and a feature matching score;

receiving a preference input via the user interface displaying the slider;

generating, by the at least one processor, via a listing generation module and using artificial intelligence, a price for the FSO based on at least the selection, a condition of the FSO, and the preference input;

automatically generating, by the at least one processor, a listing for the FSO based on at least the selection, the generated price and the condition of the FSO;

monitoring the listing by the at least one processor; and using, by the at least one processor, information from the monitoring as machine learning feedback to train and enhance predictions by the listing generation module.

2. The method of claim 1, the generating of the price for the FSO further comprising:

21

receiving, by the at least one processor, the user input comprising weights associated with features of the FSO including the selection and the condition of the FSO; inputting features associated with the FSO, by the at least one processor into an ensemble classifier;

5 using, by the at least one processor, an output of the ensemble classifier to narrow listings in a historical database into an ultimately reduced set of listings;

determining, by the at least one processor, a price for the FSO, and a time to sale for the FSO, based on the ultimately reduced set of listings.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the inputted features associated with the FSO in the ensemble classifier also include a demand, a price sold, and a similarity to previous products of the same product category as the selection.

15 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the inputted feature of the demand is predicted based on an output of the neural network machine learning classifier using similar items for sale, a time to sale for historical listings in the historical database, and frequency of search by users for the FSO as inputs.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the inputted feature of the demand in the ensemble classifier has a numerical value that either corresponds to low demand, medium demand or high demand.

25 6. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
inputting, by the at least one processor, the output of the ensemble classifier as a feature-matching score into an aggregate support vector machine (SVM), and using, by the at least one processor, the SVM to separate historical listings in the historical database using a hyperplane.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein an adjustment of the slider in a direction of the feature matching score causes the listing generation module to calculate an optimum time to sell based on a similarity of the FSO to other similar products.

35 8. A system, comprising:
a memory; and
at least one processor coupled to the memory and configured to:
receive user input from a user related to a “for sale object” (FSO);
predict, using a neural network machine learning classifier, a list of product categories that are likely to describe the FSO, wherein a neural network comprises an input layer including one or more nodes that represent an input into a model of the neural network, an output layer indicating the list of product categories, and one or more hidden layers between the input layer and the output layer, wherein one or more node weights are applied to the input to the model between the input layer and transfer to the one or more hidden layers;

50 receive the user input corresponding to a selection of one of the list of product categories;

55 display, on a user interface, a slider comprising a hyperplane adjustable by the user between a time-to-sale and a feature matching score;

receive a preference input via the user interface displaying the slider;

60 generate, by a listing generation module and using artificial intelligence, a price for the FSO based on at least the selection, a condition of the FSO, and the preference input;

65 automatically generate a listing for the FSO based on at least the selection, the generated price and the condition of the FSO;

22

monitor the listing; and
use information from the monitoring as machine learning feedback to train and enhance predictions by the listing generation module.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein to generate the price for the FSO, the at least one processor is further configured to: receive the user input comprising weights associated with features of the FSO including the selection and the condition of the FSO;

input features associated with the FSO, by the at least one processor, into an ensemble classifier;

use an output of the ensemble classifier to narrow listings in a historical database into an ultimately reduced set of listings;

15 determine a price for the FSO, and a time to sale for the FSO, based on the ultimately reduced set of listings.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the inputted features associated with the FSO in the ensemble classifier also include a demand, a price sold, and a similarity to previous products of a same product category as the selection.

20 11. The system of claim 10, wherein the inputted feature of the demand is calculated predicted based on an output of the neural network machine learning classifier using similar items for sale, a time to sale for historical listings in the historical database, and frequency of search by users for the FSO as inputs.

25 12. The system of claim 11, wherein the inputted feature of the demand in the ensemble classifier has a numerical value that either corresponds to low demand, medium demand, or high demand.

30 13. The system of claim 9, wherein the at least one processor is further configured to: input the output of the ensemble classifier as a feature-matching score into an aggregate support vector machine (SVM), and using the SVM to separate historical listings in the historical database using a hyperplane.

14. A non-transitory computer-readable device having instructions stored thereon that, when executed by at least one computing device, cause the at least one computing device to perform operations comprising:
receiving user input from a user related to a “for sale object” (FSO);
predicting, using a neural network machine learning classifier, a list of product categories that are likely to describe the FSO, wherein a neural network comprises an input layer including one or more nodes that represent an input into a model of the neural network, an output layer indicating the list of product categories, and one or more hidden layers between the input layer and the output layer, wherein one or more node weights are applied to the input to the model between the input layer and transfer to the one or more hidden layers;

receiving the user input corresponding to a selection of one of the list of product categories;

55 displaying, on a user interface, a slider comprising a hyperplane adjustable by the user between a time-to-sale and a feature matching score;

receiving a preference input via the user interface displaying the slider;

60 generating, via a listing generation module and using artificial intelligence, a price for the FSO based on at least the selection, a condition of the FSO, and the preference input;

automatically generating a listing for the FSO based on at least the selection, the generated price and the condition of the FSO;

monitoring the listing; and

23

using information from the monitoring as machine learning feedback to train and enhance predictions by the listing generation module.

15. The device of claim **14**, wherein the generating of the price for the FSO based on the selection and the condition of the FSO further comprises:

receiving the user input comprising weights associated with features of the FSO including the selection and the condition of the FSO;

inputting features associated with the FSO into an ensemble classifier;

using an output of the ensemble classifier to narrow listings in a historical database into an ultimately reduced set of listings;

determining a price for the FSO, and a time to sale for the FSO, based on the ultimately reduced set of listings.

16. The device of claim **15**, wherein the inputted features associated with the FSO in the ensemble classifier also

24

include a demand, a price sold, and a similarity to previous products of the same product category as the selection.

17. The device of claim **16**, wherein the inputted feature of the demand is predicted based on an output of the neural network machine learning classifier using similar items for sale, a time to sale for historical listings in the historical database, and frequency of search by users for the FSO as inputs.

18. The device of claim **15**, the operations further comprising:

inputting the output of the ensemble classifier as a feature-matching score into an aggregate support vector machine (SVM), and using the SVM to separate historical listings in the historical database using a hyperplane.

19. The device of claim **18**, wherein the operations further comprise shifting the hyperplane by a user preference regarding the time to sale for the FSO.

* * * * *